TIME FOR CHANGE

البروفيسور الدكتور
عبد الفتاح محمد العويسي المقدسي

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Report on the Future of the Study of Islam and Muslims in Universities and Colleges in Multicultural Britain

Abd al-Fattah El-Awaisi

Malory Nye

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PREFACE

This is major report based on a research project on teaching and research in the Study of Islam and Muslims in UK higher education. This research has examined fifty five higher education units where Islam and Muslims is taught, including Islamic Studies, Religious Studies, Middle Eastern Studies, as well as departments of Politics and International Relations. The report not only provides a very important overview of the current situation, but also examines some of the key issues and challenges facing the field, and makes recommendations for how the field must be reshaped and developed to make what we offer at higher education level in the Study of Islam and Muslims relevant to contemporary multicultural British society.

It is hoped that the report will play a key role in shaping and developing teaching and research in the Study of Islam and Muslim at university level in the UK. As the aim is to educate the next generation of scholars, both nationally and internationally, in the Study of Islam and Muslims, to enable them to face the challenges and opportunities of a diverse and multicultural world in the twenty-first century, there is an urgent need to set a new agenda for the Study of Islam and Muslims.

The aim of this new agenda should be to challenge and develop current teaching and scholarship, recognising that this is a time for change in Islamic Studies. There must be better education at university level on Islam and Muslims in today's world which reflects the needs of our contemporary multicultural society. The agenda should bring scholars together from all backgrounds, based on a principle of mutual respect, in order to develop a common intellectual goal in the field of the Study of Islam and Muslims.

This approach should not be faith based, and should not be left to religious organisations, but to centres for teaching and research of the highest standard based on critical and analytical debate. Through this a better understanding of Islam and Muslims can be developed -- both for Muslims and non-Muslims -- in an environment focused on a common sense of purpose and belonging. This agenda is timely and necessary, particularly to prevent the misguided and narrow interpretations of Islam which are the source of so many problems in our multicultural society. Indeed, it is only through multicultural education that we can work to eliminate extremism and fundamentalism.

Professor Abd al-Fattah El-Awaisi
Professor Malory Nye

Al-Maktoum Institute, Scotland
October 2006

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PART 1: SETTING THE SCENE

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1. INTRODUCTION

Time for Change

There is a clear and very obvious need for the Study of Islam and Muslims to be developed as a significant field of study across all levels of education in Britain. This is not only for the education of British youth as global citizens with a good knowledge and understanding of the contemporary world. It is also essential as a means of understanding our own multicultural society.

Teaching on Islam and Muslims has been an important part of university curricula in the UK for well over 250 years. But now is the time for change. We need to develop this field of study for today's world and, in particular, to rethink many of the loosely understood ideas that frame so much of the public debate surrounding this.

We cannot avoid the real challenges of living in a diverse, multicultural and multireligious British society. The London bombings in July 2005 and the August 2006 alleged bomb plots, and ongoing media coverage of what some call a 'clash of civilisations' all shout out to us to respond to these very real challenges. There is an urgent need to look for better ways of understanding religious and cultural diversity, in particular the role of Islam and Muslims in this dynamic, globalised context.

There is of course huge public interest in so many issues relating to Islam and Muslims in contemporary Britain, reflecting many concerns and perceived threats. This report does not intend to provide solutions to such issues. Our aim is to look at one particular aspect of this very broad set of debates -- that is, to highlight the role of education (and in particular higher education) as the key to address these issues. A re-evaluation of the teaching of Islamic Studies in British higher education will play some part in contributing to the wider issues and problems.

The Developing Debate on the Study of Islam and Muslims

This report is based on a two year research project, commissioned by Al-Maktoum Institute, Dundee, Scotland and jointly authored by Professor Abd al-Fattah El-Awaisi and Professor Malory Nye. Al-Maktoum Institute is an independent research-led institution of higher education, providing programmes in the study of Islam and Muslims at postgraduate level.

The report was prompted by the perceived changes and needs in the field of Islamic Studies, particularly in the wake of major contemporary issues

such as globalisation and multiculturalism, but also within the national and international context of teaching and research in the field.

These issues have been at the forefront of the agenda for Al-Maktoum Institute. Indeed, the Institute jointly hosted an international symposium in March 2004 on the future development of Islamic Studies, from which emerged a framework titled the 'Dundee Declaration', intended to start the process of mapping out the development of the field. An obvious question for the Institute has come from this, of how do the Institute's concerns relate to other higher education institutions in Britain. The issue of multiculturalism is also firmly at the heart of the Institute's academic work, and so it established in 2002 a Centre for Research on Multiculturalism and Islam and Muslims in Scotland, which amongst other activities organised an international symposium in Spring 2006 on the 'Challenges of Multiculturalism'. The Institute was also the first higher education institution in Britain to create a professorial chair in multiculturalism (currently held by one of the authors of this report). As a corollary of this, the authors of this report have consistently argued for a number of years that education is one of the main ways to tackle extremism. The way in which higher education in the study of Islam and Muslim is structured and delivered must therefore be recognised as a key area for public debate and scrutiny.

The Study of Islam and Muslims in Multicultural Britain

In multicultural Britain today there are -- according to the most recent 2001 census -- approximately 1.5 million people who identify themselves as Muslims. Together these make up the largest non-Christian religious minority group in Britain, followed by Hindus, Sikhs, Jews, and people of many other faiths and none, along with people of many different Christian groups. The majority of the British population face the considerable challenge that there are some deeply embedded issues within our society regarding Islam and Muslims, of stereotyping, hostility, Islamophobia and misunderstanding, and the legacy of orientalist thinking and attitudes is still very evident today. There needs to be appreciation that Muslims are no longer the 'others', they are part of the fabric of British society.

It is also clear that most British non-Muslims do not 'get' Islam; they do not understand what makes Muslims 'tick'. One point that comes up again and again in public debates on Islam and Muslims is the special place for Muslims of the Qur'an (the Muslim Holy Book) and Prophet Muhammad, the Prophet of Islam. The wider society needs to recognise that there is a very deep sensitivity and volatility among Muslims to all

issues related to these two aspects of Muslim faith. A clear illustration of this is that the major concerns and public demonstrations by Muslims in recent years have emerged from one or both of these issues, either the Qur'an or the Prophet Muhammad (for example, the Danish cartoons controversy in February 2006 and the remarks made by Pope Benedict XVI in September 2006).

At the same time, however, we need to recognise that many British communities, including British Muslims, have failed to understand each other, and have failed to engage effectively in multicultural Britain. Indeed, there is a mutual incomprehension between communities at the heart of this, and this mutual incomprehension can only be addressed by education.

As part of this, therefore, there is a strong need to improve education among minority communities, particularly British Muslims. There is clear evidence that the current educational structures are letting down Muslims who were born and brought-up in Britain. The most favoured option so far -- of Muslim schools and colleges, set up and run by Muslims, for Muslims, for educating 'Islamically' -- is not the answer to these difficult questions. The agenda needs to be much more challenging than that for all involved.

These points strike at some of the problems and issues of multiculturalism, which is itself a well debated term in some areas of contemporary British public debate. We acknowledge that there are various debates and understandings of the concept of multiculturalism, and that there have been considerable misplaced criticisms of the term. Multiculturalism is not about separatism, ghettoisation or balkanisation, it is instead a recognition of both diversity and the need for common ground, mutual respect, and cultural engagement. The demographics of cultural diversity and pluralism in today's Britain present us with many challenges and opportunities, and the onus of public debate should be to find effective ways of managing such diversity at all levels for the benefit of the whole society. As this report argues, separatism and tokenism are not appropriate responses to such challenges.

Main Themes of the Report

This report will be setting the scene for the development of the study of Islam and Muslims, by mapping out current provision of teaching in the broad areas of Islamic Studies -- that is, in Middle East Studies and Theology/Religious Studies departments and centres. In particular we will be showing the diversity and range of specialisms covered. In doing so, we

will identify the structural gaps and weaknesses of the field, in particular the problem of dividing the study of Islam and Muslims into two separate subject areas, and the current lack of cohesion in the field.

In this report we pick up the considerable discussion, particularly among academics, of what is often referred to as a 'crisis' in the teaching of Islamic Studies. It is worth noting that the authors of this report are by no means the first to identify such a sense of crisis in the field, as is evident in reports and newspaper articles dating back to 2002 and 2003. This sense of crisis is also evident in the comments collected within the research for this report from heads of departments and centres, which are included in appendix 4 of the full report.

The report also identifies the key issues of multiculturalism, globalisation, post-colonialism, and Muslims in the west, and how these set the agenda for where the field needs to be developed to meet these new challenges in the twenty-first century. The final part of the report focuses on mapping the future for the field, with nine recommendations for government, policy makers and educationalists.

All those who participate in the development of this area of higher education have the responsibility to respond to the new realities of contemporary multicultural Britain. We must ensure the integration of all aspects of society within these debates, and also recognise the need to make the issues of the field a mainstream part of our curricular.

2. THE AIMS OF THE REPORT

The aims of this report are:

i) to map out the current situation in the field of the Study of Islam and Muslims in British higher education institutions.
ii) to identify key contemporary trends and difficulties within the field.
iii) to present a framework for the development of the field which responds to the needs of a diverse and multicultural twenty-first century.

There are of course many aspects of the debates about Muslims in Britain, ranging across diverse areas of concern. We argue, though, that very little discussion has been focused on higher education, and in particular on how knowledge and understanding of Islam and Muslims is provided at this level. Therefore the report aims to put what is being taught and researched in UK higher education institutions in the study of Islam and Muslims at the centre of public debates in Britain.

In addition, this report is intended to be a positive contribution to our understanding of current educational issues, to assist academic colleagues and policy makers working in this area. Indeed it is not by any way a criticism of any particular policy or institution. One of our main intentions is to get a debate started. We recognise that not everyone will agree with the recommendations of this report, but we sincerely hope that the report will act as a catalyst to spark a necessary debate about the role of education.

Furthermore, the aim of this report is not to examine the interpretations of Islam nor espouse any agendas concerning the 'reformation' of Islam. Additionally, the report is focused on teaching of Islamic Studies in higher education, and does not address wider issues in higher education such as the participation of Muslim students in all fields of study, or indeed their attitudes concerning higher education in the UK, or the wider Muslim community.

This report recognises that there is important work to be done on developing the curricula for teaching the Study of Islam and Muslims, both in terns of structure and content. Although some of these issues are referenced and explored in this report, it is beyond the scope of this report to address directly particular recommendations for curriculum development and delivery.

In short, the main focus of this report is to examine the study of Islam and Muslims in British higher education, and to map out how this field needs to be developed.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Brief Overview of the Methodology

The primary sources for the research in this report are the activities and documentation of the many departments and centres in the UK providing higher education programmes and courses in Arabic and Islamic Studies, Middle Eastern Studies, and Islamic Studies with Religious Studies and Theology, along with related areas such as Politics and International Relations. This section outlines the methodology followed to gather data for the project.

The development of the project followed three main stages between 2004 and 2006:

- Stage 1: the appointment of two postdoctoral Research Fellows from different disciplinary areas to make a wide-ranging survey of the departments and centres.
- Stage 2: the collation of data collected by the Research Fellows and other gathered material into a single framework by the two Project Directors.
- Stage 3: the writing of the report in summer 2006.

At the initial stage of the project in summer 2004, the two Research Fellows were given the following remit for the objectives of the research:

- To provide a review of the historical development of the study of Islam and Muslims in the UK, particularly with regard to institutional contexts for teaching and research in this area.
- To bring together information on current institutional activities in this field, particularly with reference to higher education departments and centres of Islamic Studies, Middle Eastern Studies, and Arabic Studies.
- To produce an interim report on the data and findings of the research, detailing a comparison of methods, approaches, and experiences of departments and centres in the field, along with an overview of the present standing and development of Islamic Studies in the UK.

BACKGROUNDS OF THE PROJECT DIRECTORS

The project was directed by Professor Abd al-Fattah El-Awaisi, Principal and Vice-Chancellor, and Professor Malory Nye, Depute Principal for Academic Affairs, Al-Maktoum Institute.

Professor Abd al-Fattah El-Awaisi is also the founder of the new field of inquiry of Islamicjerusalem Studies, the first Chair in Islamicjerusalem Studies, and is the Director of the Centre for Islamicjerusalem Studies. He is a British Arab, and has an excellent record of research publication in both English and Arabic, most recently a ground breaking monograph titled *Introducing Islamicjerusalem*. He has been studying, teaching and researching in the Study of Islam and Muslims at both Arab and British universities for nearly 30 years. He also received his training in Middle Eastern Studies and taught for a number of years in Religious Studies before taking up his present position.

Professor Malory Nye is also the first Chair in Multiculturalism and the Director of the Centre for Research on Multiculturalism and Islam and Muslims in Scotland. He is originally from Wales, and has authored three major books, including *Multiculturalism and Minority Religions in Britain* and *Religion: the Basics*. He has also edited the scholarly journal *Culture and Religion* for a number of years.

Throughout the project the two Project Directors met on a regular basis either with the Research Fellows, the Research Assistant or on their own in order to establish, monitor and develop the progress of the project. In the final stages of the writing of the report, the two Project Directors worked closely together to jointly produce the final project report.

BACKGROUNDS OF THE RESEARCHERS

Dr Steven J. Sutcliffe completed his PhD in the Open University, and has a good background disciplinary knowledge in the study of religion in UK universities. One of the strengths of Dr Sutcliffe is that he does not have a research specialism in Islamic Studies and was therefore able to bring a fresh perspective on the issues and challenges of the teaching of Islamic Studies within Theology and Religious Studies contexts. Dr Sutcliffe is now Lecturer in Religion and Society in the School of Divinity, University of Edinburgh.

Dr Maria Holt has a PhD in Gender and Middle East Studies from the University of York. She was selected for the project on the basis of her knowledge of the area of Middle East Studies in the UK, which was in contrast to the focus on Religious Studies of Dr Sutcliffe. Therefore, Dr Holt's responsibility was to survey and conduct interviews within departments of Middle Eastern Studies, Arabic and Islamic Studies, and Politics. Dr Holt is now Research Fellow in the Democracy and Islam Programme at the Centre of the Study of Democracy, University of Westminster, London.

From June to September 2006, a Research Assistant was appointed to assist with the production of the final report. Louise Soutar is a graduate of Modern Languages (Spanish) from the University of St Andrews.

STAGE 1: DATA GATHERING

The Research Fellows surveyed thirty-six different universities and institutions which included a total of fifty-five departments and centres. Initial research was conducted primarily through a survey of institutional websites, course booklets, promotional literature and module descriptors. This was then followed up by contact being made by email and/or letter to Heads of Department and other departmental representatives. The letter introduced the project and its aims, and included a request to 1) complete an enclosed questionnaire and 2) to schedule a time for the Research Fellow to visit the department to conduct an interview. In most cases, this resulted in the submission of a completed questionnaire and a visit by the Research Fellow to the department. In a small number of cases, however, the communication was only by email and/or telephone. The interviews were conducted between June and November 2004 and a full list of all departmental visits is given in appendix 3.

The bulk of the interviews were in person and lasted between one and two hours. Where possible, the interviewees were able to complete the questionnaires beforehand and the interview was then spent expanding on particular issues, usually in a fairly informal manner. In some cases, the interview was based on using the questionnaire schedule as a list of questions as the interviewees had not completed it beforehand.

The remit for the Research Fellows was to obtain the following data from each of the departments and centres:

- The department's *aims and objectives* and *mission statement*, as articulated in its core documentation (such as QAA reports, departmental publicity etc.)
- The department's *niche*. This will be articulated and demonstrated in a range of ways such as:
    - subject areas covered by staff research interests and taught courses
    - current and past student recruitment
    - external funding sources
    - recent major research or consultancy projects
    - national and international networks and affiliations (to professional and other bodies)
    - the department's articulation of its approaches and methodologies
- Key questions to pursue with senior managers in the departments (i.e. Heads of Department, Centre Directors, Student Recruitment Officers, Research Officers, etc.)
    - 'What attracts students to come to your department/ university?'
    - 'What balance is there between home and overseas students -- at undergraduate and postgraduate level?'
    - 'What do you see as your core student recruitment market?'
    - 'How do you see the relationship between Islamic Studies and other disciplines?'
    - Following from this, 'where do you see the difference and overlap between Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies? Which term is more useful -- academically and for recruitment?'
    - Following the THES article on 31 October 2003 (and the 2002 BRISMES report) on the difficulties in funding and recruitment in Middle Eastern Studies, 'why do think there has been a decline, and what explanations and solutions do they have for this crisis?'

The majority of information gathered by the Research Fellows relating to these questions came through either email or face-to-face interviews. Summaries of this data are given in appendix 2 of the report. Comments and reflections from the Heads of Department and departmental representatives who were interviewed by one of the Research Fellows, Dr Maria Holt, are given in appendix 4.

Further updates were obtained from June to August 2006.

METHODOLOGICAL ISSUES

The Research Fellows faced a number of methodological problems in carrying out the research for this report. The most significant of these was the breadth and diversity of the subject area including a number of fields of study and specialisms which made the interpretation of the information gathered quite difficult. They found, in particular, considerable difficulties in categorising departments or institutions dealing with the study of Islam or the Middle East, as there is considerable diversity of terminology from one university to another. While some departments are specifically named 'Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies', others are divided along disciplinary lines (for example, Politics, Sociology, Religious Studies). Many students are studying aspects of Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies at universities which do not have departments of that name. Some universities (for example, SOAS and St Andrews) contain Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies within various Schools (for example, Law, International Relations and Languages). This makes the task of comparing like-with-like a difficult issue.

Secondly, the responses of departments were uneven. While some were prompt and forthcoming, there were a few that displayed suspicion or a reluctance to participate in the research. A small number failed to respond altogether, including the University of Cambridge and the Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies, or refused to participate i.e. the University of Wales, Lampeter.

Thirdly, the numerical data -- based on interviews with academics -- tended to be presented to the Research Fellows in a way that made analysis and comparison difficult. While some departmental representatives were willing to provide in-depth figures, others preferred to give quite rough estimates or approximations relying mainly on their own memories. Therefore, such information resulting from the interviews can probably be best described as anecdotal.

STAGE 2: COLLATION OF DATA

Two interim reports were produced by each of the Research Fellows based on the departments and centres they had surveyed. These reports also contained the Research Fellows' key interim conclusions and reflections on pertinent issues in the field. The reports were finalised in December 2004.

In the second stage of the project, the two Project Directors reviewed and collated all the materials produced by the Research Fellows with the particular aim of integrating the two separate contexts of the research. That is, to bring together the material from both the Middle East Studies departments and the Religious Studies departments.

In June 2006, Louise Soutar was employed as a Research Assistant in order to assist with the drafting, writing and production of the report as well as providing administrative support for the project. During this time, she also gathered updates and new material for the data on departments and centres.

STAGE 3: REPORT

On the basis of the data which had been collected and collated in stages 1 and 2, the two Directors met on a regular basis from June 2006 where they brainstormed and analysed the data. This resulted in the production of the report in its final shape. In the production of the report, the two Directors wanted to give a good opportunity to report the views of the many scholars interviewed, although they may disagree with their arguments and perspectives. Indeed, the comments from the Heads of Department interviewed by one of the Research Fellows -- as provided in appendix 4 -- indicate the considerable diversity of viewpoints and richness of the different lenses.

The Project Directors decided to produce the report in two forms:

1) The full report would include a complete summary of the data from the research and provide an in-depth overview and analysis of the current situation in the UK. In addition, the report will include several appendices. This full version of the report will be published as a book and will serve as the central document for a national seminar organised by Al-Maktoum Institute in Dundee to discuss the report's findings and recommendations. The two Directors will make sure that the full report will be distributed to all the centres and departments included in the research along with other interested parties such as policy makers and governmental bodies before organising the national seminar in 2007.

2) Further to this, the report will also be published in an easily accessible format as an executive summary in October 2006 for widespread dissemination and discussion. The aim of making this accessible is to kick-start the debate in the public arena on this crucial subject as this is one of the most significant challenges and opportunities to be faced by

the wider community in diverse and multicultural Britain in the twenty-first century.

The Directors were very keen to present information about the departments and centres which is as accurate and up-to-date as possible. Therefore, any further feedback from Heads of Department would be much appreciated.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The two Directors are very grateful indeed to colleagues who gave up time in their busy schedules to answer the questionnaires of the two Research Fellows and Research Assistant and to speak to them in interviews.

We are also grateful to Frances Guy, Head of the Engaging with the Islamic World Group, and Dr Cornelia Sorabji, Head of the Research Team of the same Group for their insights and comments during the meeting with them in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office on 7 June 2006.

Further thanks go to Al-Maktoum Institute academic staff for their valuable comments and feedback on reading the first draft of this report.

Funding for all stages of this project was provided by the Al-Maktoum Institute Research Development Fund. The investment by the Institute in this project is a clear indication of its commitment to taking a leading role in the development of the Study of Islam and Muslims within UK higher education.

4. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Arabic and Islamic Studies has been taught in the UK for over 250 years and has a history that can be located in specific university Chairs and departments. The earliest established Chairs were in Arabic: firstly at the University of Oxford in 1640 and subsequently at the University of Cambridge in 1660. A number of specialist centres and positions in Orientalism, Arabic, and Islamic Studies developed at universities including Durham, Edinburgh, Leeds and Manchester in the nineteenth century. It is also significant to note the establishment of the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London in 1917 as a result of the Reay Committee Report of 1909.

COLONIAL CONTEXT

The development of these centres significantly coincided with the period of British colonial rule and it is clear that the growth of this discipline emerged from that context. That is, the development of the discipline of Arabic and Islamic Studies and its agenda was a response to the needs and the challenges of the time (the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries). During this colonial era, the two main purposes of the development of the discipline of Arabic and Islamic Studies were:

1. The political and administrative needs of British foreign policy within the context of colonialism.
2. The religious need, with a substantial part of scholarship in Islamic Studies being pursued by theologians and thinkers for missionary purposes.

Of course, much of the scholarship in this era was also motivated by genuine intellectual and academic curiosity. Alongside this, however, the rationale for funding and development of the discipline was firmly rooted in what the Reay Committee Report portrayed as a balance between 'pure' scholarship and 'applied' practical training for 'future Indian and colonial officials' which was a task 'of vital importance to the Empire'.

POST-COLONIAL CONTEXT

During the time of decolonisation in the mid-twentieth century, new needs were identified and the UK government commissioned two landmark reports which were to have a significant impact on the field

throughout the second half of the century. The Scarborough Committee Report in 1948 recommended expansion of Oriental Studies in British universities and selected five universities in which special facilities were to be made available. As a consequence, for example, a School of Oriental Studies was established in Durham, with special responsibilities for Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies.

The Hayter Committee Report on Area Studies in 1961 recommended extensive development in Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies in the UK with particular emphasis on contemporary affairs. This report recommended special support for centres at the Universities of Durham, London and Oxford. Durham's Centre for Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies was set up in 1962.

DEVELOPMENT IN THE 1960S AND 1970S

- The establishment of a number of national centres was a result of the two reports.
- The development of the debate and critique of the concept of orientalism which reached its peak with the publication of Edward Said's *Orientalism* in 1978.
- This led to large-scale redesignation of Oriental Studies into Middle Eastern Studies but not any major structural or institutional changes.
- A number of significant international events including the 1967 Arab-Israeli War and the independence of a number of Gulf states in the late 1960s/early 1970s, for example, the United Arab Emirates.
- The development of the field of Religious Studies largely from the late 1960s onwards which broadly developed along two related strands. One of these was the growth of Religious Studies sections and programmes in Theology and Divinity departments and the creation of new departments of Religious Studies particularly associated with the model established by the University of Lancaster.
- The teaching of Islamic Studies became established as one of the core 'world religions' for these new Religious Studies programmes. This led to the appointment of scholars in the departments of Religious Studies and Theology and Religious Studies to contribute to teaching on Islam.

THE CURRENT CRISIS

Following these developments in the late twentieth century, Islamic Studies and Middle Eastern Studies was no longer required to meet the needs of colonial foreign policy. This has left the field in something of a vacuum and it has so far failed to develop a significant rationale or purpose.

In addition to this, Islamic Studies has found itself in an uneasy position in balance between centres of Religious Studies and Area Studies (i.e. Middle Eastern Studies and African Studies).

The institutional allocation of Islamic Studies either within Religious Studies or within Middle Eastern Studies has prevented the field developing in an effective way and has left it in many cases marginal and vulnerable to both institutional restructuring and staffing changes.

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PART 2: MAPPING THE PROBLEMS

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5. The Challenges of the Twenty-First Century

As a starting point for mapping the current problems in the field, it is essential to recognise the following four areas of challenge which have a direct bearing on the development of teaching and research in the Study of Islam and Muslims:

1. Multicultural Society
2. Globalisation
3. Independence and Post-Colonialism (two-way traffic)
4. Muslims in the West

1. Multicultural Society

Britain in the twenty-first century is clearly a multicultural society, which presents challenges at all levels of education. We acknowledge that the term multiculturalism has been subject to considerable scrutiny and debate, particularly in recent years. However, we argue that it is a very useful term to describe the complex range of issues associated with cultural and religious diversity in contemporary British society, and the social management of the challenges and opportunities such diversity offers. Of course, the term multiculturalism has a range of meanings, and there have been considerable misplaced criticisms of this term in certain areas of recent public debate.

For the authors of this report, multiculturalism is not about separatism, ghettoisation, balkanisation, or tokenism, nor is it concerned with singling out any particular community for special favour or concern. Instead the concept of multiculturalism requires us to consider the social and educational challenges of cultural diversity, along with the need for integration and common ground among British citizens of all backgrounds. Multiculturalism affects all parts of British society, and all communities.

On this basis, therefore, we argue that multiculturalism also offers distinct social and cultural advantages, and that educational development -- right up to HE level -- should involve reflection on these challenges and advantages. Because of the cultural and religious profile of contemporary Britain, the Study of Islam and Muslims is right at the heart of these issues.

- It is important to recognise that multiculturalism is not a new phenomenon, even though the terminology is new. The pace and experience of multiculturalism in the twenty-first century is intense and leaves very few societies and countries unaffected.
- Multiculturalism is not only about difference, and is misunderstood when it is pursued as a policy for separating and ghettoising particular communities.
- Multiculturalism is a process, and such processes are always contextual to particular places and cultural experiences. The experience of multiculturalism in Britain is unique to this country.
- At the heart of multiculturalism is the urgent need for the management of diversity at all levels, and education plays a very significant role within such management.
- Therefore multiculturalism is both concerned with the mutual acceptance of, and mutual respect for, difference and the requirement for common ground.
- Multiculturalism not only requires a toleration of others, it also necessitates finding ways of mutual cooperation between communities and individuals at all levels of society.

2. Globalisation

The common experience of the twenty-first century is one of rapid technological change leading to unique historical experiences of fast and easy long-distance travel; almost instantaneous communication across continents; and widespread access to media, communication and information that transcends particular boundaries and cultures. These experiences of globalisation open up all individuals, cultures and countries in unprecedented ways and lead to unique challenges and opportunities which are probably unlike any that have been in the past.

Globalisation, therefore, is primarily about flows of people and information across cultures, boundaries and continents and the particular local responses to these flows.

Within these experiences of globalisation, and in the face of global forces that cannot be ignored, the response of isolation and ghettoisation is no longer available. The Study of Islam and Muslims again urgently needs to be able to reflect the complications of such new realities.

3. Independence and Post-Colonialism (two-way traffic)

There are close relations in the contemporary world between European nations and many Muslim majority countries in the Arab world, Asia and Africa due to the previous experiences of colonisation in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The second half of the twentieth century, however, witnessed the processes of decolonisation and the emergence of independent states. In this new situation, partnership and collaboration has replaced subjugation and colonisation.

This development should lead to a better understanding of the West in Muslim countries and vice versa through both the medium of multicultural education and a recognition by scholars in all countries of the need to develop common intellectual goals in order to transcend and challenge the old 'them and us' perspectives.

4. Muslims in the West

This is the first time in history that Muslims have established themselves in significant numbers in the West, where they have become citizens of European countries. Accordingly, for the West, the Muslims are no longer the 'others' but are part of European society. Therefore, conceptualisations of the West 'versus' Islam are no longer viable. In addition, the old-fashioned Muslim jurist division of the world into *Dar al-Harb* and *Dar al-Islam* is a historical ruling and has nothing to do with the twenty-first century.

This new development in the West has provided new challenges and opportunities which need to be addressed in order to establish mutual respect and peaceful coexistence within Western societies.

6. MAPPING THE CURRENT SITUATION: DEPARTMENTAL INTERESTS

This section reviews and analyses the data given in appendix 2 from departments and centres in the UK providing higher education programmes and courses in Arabic and Islamic Studies; Middle Eastern Studies; and Islamic Studies with Religious Studies and Theology, along with related areas such as Politics and International Relations.

In order to make sense of what is clearly a very fragmented field of study our approach will initially attempt to map out the main approaches and locations of teaching and research in the field on a regional basis i.e. Scotland, Wales, northern England, south west England and south east England.

As the tables and brief departmental profiles will indicate, the most significant division of the subject is into departments of Theology/Religious Studies and departments of Middle Eastern Studies/Islamic Studies. Summary tables of departmental interests can be found on pages 30 to 32 (tables 6.1 to 6-5)

SCOTLAND

The University of Aberdeen

Islamic Studies courses started within the Divinity and Religious Studies programme. In 2004, the University developed a relationship with Al-Maktoum Institute through postgraduate specialist study of Islam and Muslims. In addition, during this period, the University made other appointments in French, International Relations and Anthropology.

Al-Maktoum Institute for Arabic and Islamic Studies

An independent Scottish higher education institution based in Dundee and its degrees are validated by the University of Aberdeen. Al-Maktoum Institute is an example of bringing different methodological approaches together in a focused way. The Institute has been established with a focus to develop a new agenda for Islamic Studies into the Study of Islam and Muslims.

The main characteristics of the Institute can be summarised as: i) broad and integrative focus rather than narrow and specialist; ii) methodological developing a focused agenda for a single field of study which is interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary; iii) a combination of Social Science, Humanities and Islamic Studies

approaches without the theological slant i.e. deals with people, society and core sources; iv) multiculturalism and the Study of Islam and British Muslims rather than only Muslims in Britain; v) Islamicjerusalem as a core part of the Study of Islam and Muslims and as a practical example and case study.

The University of Edinburgh
From the beginning there has been a distinction between Islamic Studies/Middle Eastern Studies and Islamic Studies in Divinity. Edinburgh has also established an institute in order to bring together scholars working at the University from different disciplinary backgrounds. There is currently no academic member of staff appointed in the School of Divinity with a research specialism in Islamic Studies and therefore the Divinity/Religious Studies programme is required to depend on the department of Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies.

The University of Glasgow
There had been a department of Arabic and Islamic Studies which ceased to operate and Islamic Studies was then taught within Divinity and Religious Studies. As part of Divinity, Islamic Studies has been developing within a wider 'world religions' approach. There is also some teaching in Sociology.

The University of St Andrews
Located within Middle Eastern Studies, there is no Islamic Studies in the Divinity section and the main focus is on Politics and Arabic in historical contexts with an attempt to bring all these areas together in an institute.

The University of Stirling
This claims to be the only autonomous Religious Studies department in Scotland and has historically had Islamic Studies taught as several modules in that context. However, the departure of staff and restructuring of the University has led to the lack of development of Islamic Studies and the subject has not been developed in any other areas of the University.

WALES

Cardiff University
Islamic Studies is taught only within Theology and Religious Studies.

Trinity College, Carmarthen, University of Wales
Islamic Studies is taught as a minor option in Theology and Religious Studies with a particular emphasis on the education of RE teachers.

University of Wales, Lampeter
Islamic Studies is taught only within Theology and Religious Studies. Until recently, Islamic Studies had a special status within the previous name of the department (Theology, Religious and Islamic Studies) but this name was recently changed to Theology and Religious Studies. Lampeter and Birmingham are the only Theology and Religious Studies Departments with a substantial subgroup in the Department with a focus on Islamic Studies and which offer an undergraduate degree in Islamic Studies.

NORTH ENGLAND

The University of Central Lancashire
Islamic Studies is a small unit as a minor Honours programme in the School of Education and Social Science. It is hard to evaluate due to its small size.

The University of Chester
Islamic Studies is taught only within Theology and Religious Studies.

Durham University
Islamic Studies is located only in Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies with no teaching in Religious Studies.

Lancaster University
Like Glasgow, Lancaster tried to establish a specialist department but this closed and Islamic Studies has continued until recently within the department of Religious Studies. However, it is similar to Stirling in that it is currently underdeveloped due to staff changes.

The University of Leeds
Islamic Studies is found in both Middle Eastern/Arabic Studies and Religious Studies. There is a wide gap between these two sections with two distinct and separate agendas.

The University of Manchester
Manchester is solely focused on Arabic and Middle Eastern Studies.

Manchester Metropolitan University
Islamic Studies is a small unit as a sub-degree programme in Politics and Philosophy in a similar way to the University of Central Lancashire.

SOUTH WEST ENGLAND

The University of Bristol
Only located in Theology and Religious Studies. However, at present, there is no academic member of staff appointed with a research specialism due to staff changes. This is similar to Lancaster and Stirling.

The University of Exeter
Three main areas of Islamic Studies are taught at Exeter: language and literature; Sufism; and politics. This started with Arabic and Islamic Studies and later Middle Eastern Studies developed in the Politics Department (Social Sciences). There is no teaching within Theology and Religious Studies. Arabic and Islamic Studies at Exeter has been moving towards including Middle Eastern Studies which still stands in its own right in the Politics Department. However, it is interesting to note that teaching on Middle Eastern Studies occurs at both units. It is not clear how much common focus across these areas has so far been achieved. The development of Islamic Studies has tended to focus with recent appointments on Classical/Sufism Studies, which has given the study of Islam at Exeter a very particular research focus.

The University of Gloucestershire
Islamic Studies is only located in Theology and Religious Studies. However, at present, there is no academic member of staff appointed with a research specialism due to staff changes.

SOUTH EAST ENGLAND

Birkbeck, University of London
Islamic Studies is a small programme in the Faculty of Continuing Education and is therefore similar to the University of Central Lancashire and Manchester Metropolitan University.

The University of Birmingham
Teaching of Islamic Studies at Birmingham began with a focus on two different areas -- firstly on Christian-Muslim relations (in the Centre for the Study of Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations) and

secondly on education at Westhill College. Both of these were developed at the Selly Oak Colleges outwith the University of Birmingham. They were brought together within the context of an amalgamation into Theology and Religious Studies within the University of Birmingham. It is all currently within Theology and Religious Studies and there is no Middle East or Arabic Studies. Lampeter and Birmingham are similar in that they both offer undergraduate and postgraduate programmes in Islamic Studies within Theology and Religious Studies.

The University of Cambridge
Teaching is largely focused on Orientalist Studies (Arabic Studies and Classical Islam) with some teaching also taking place in the Faculty of Divinity.

King's College, London
Teaching takes place only within Theology and Religious Studies.

The University of Nottingham
Islamic Studies at Nottingham is taught within three main areas. It is an established part of the Theology programme with a strong emphasis on Christian-Muslim relations. The other two areas are within the School of History and the School of Politics and International Relations.

The Open University
Islamic Studies is taught only within the Religious Studies programme.

The University of Oxford
Due to the structure of the University, the Colleges and the independent organisations, the two main focuses are in the University Faculty of Oriental Studies and in St Antony's College Middle East Centre and these are largely separate. The St Antony's Middle East Centre is 'not University funded' and has its own endowment.

Oxford Brookes University
Two modules in Islamic Studies only are taught within the BA (Hons) in Theology and Religious Studies by distance learning.

The School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London
Islamic Studies is covered in several centres and departments broadly reflecting SOAS's own traditional orientalist approach based on a distinction between 'Area Studies' (i.e. Middle Eastern

Studies) and Language Studies. Despite the range of subject areas covered it seems that there is no central focus.

INSTITUTIONAL PROBLEMS

In short, it seems a number of problems emerge from the contemporary experiences of the departments of both Middle Eastern Studies and Religious Studies, including the following:

- There appears to be evidence of pressures to compromise academic standards in order to recruit overseas students to boost funding resources.

- Some departments have chosen to rely on the use of local imams and religious leaders to teach subjects related to Islamic Studies.

- As will be shown in the next section, some departments are focusing on issues that are not relevant to the twenty-first century and the needs of multicultural Britain.

- Some Middle Eastern Centres are 'virtual' web-based centres which appear to exist primarily as websites.

- As will be shown later, many Muslim religious higher education institutions focus strongly on their own international political links and agendas and often define their purposes as serving particular discrete Muslim sects or political communities rather than the wider needs of multicultural Britain.

Table 6.1
Departmental Interests -- Scotland

University	Religious Studies		Middle East Studies/ Arabic and Islamic Studies		Other
	1	2	1	2	
University of Aberdeen	General	Contemporary Muslims in Britain*			Politics
Al-Maktoum Institute					•Study of Islam & Muslims •Islamicjerusalem Studies •Multiculturalism
University of Edinburgh	None at present		Languages & literature	History	
University of Glasgow	General	Sufism*/ Islamic law*			Muslims in Britain* (Sociology)
University of St Andrews			Arabic language	Early Arab history	Politics
University of Stirling	None at present				

* Research interests of current member of staff

Table 6.2
Departmental Interests -- Wales

University	Religious Studies		Middle East Studies/ Arabic and Islamic Studies		Other
	1	2	1	2	
Cardiff University	General	Muslims in Britain*			
Trinity College, Carmarthen	General				
University of Wales, Lampeter	Islamic law*				

* Research interests of current member of staff

Table 6.3
Departmental Interests -- North England

University	Religious Studies		Middle East Studies/ Arabic and Islamic Studies		Other
	1	2	1	2	
University of Central Lancashire					General (Education and Social Science)
University of Chester	General	Muslims in Britain*			
Durham University			Languages	Politics	
Lancaster University	None at present				
University of Leeds	General	Muslims in Britain*	Languages	History	Politics
University of Manchester			Languages	History	
Manchester Metropolitan University					General (Politics and Philosophy)

* Research interests of current member of staff

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Table 6.4
Departmental Interests -- South West England

University	Religious Studies		Middle East Studies/ Arabic and Islamic Studies		Other
	1	2	1	2	
University of Bristol	None at present				
University of Exeter			Languages & literature	Sufism*	Politics/Middle Eastern Studies
University of Gloucestershire	None at present				

* Research interests of current member of staff

Table 6.5
Departmental Interests – South East England

University	Religious Studies 1	Religious Studies 2	Middle East Studies/ Arabic and Islamic Studies 1	Middle East Studies/ Arabic and Islamic Studies 2	Other
Birkbeck, University of London					General (the Faculty of Continuing Education)
University of Birmingham	Christian -Muslim relations	•Qur'anic studies* •Islamic law* •Muslims in Britain*			
University of Cambridge	General	Sufism*	Languages & literature	History	
King's College, London	General				
University of Nottingham	General	Christian-Muslim relations*			History/Middle Eastern Studies
Open University	General				
University of Oxford			Languages & literature	History	Middle Eastern Studies/Politics
Oxford Brookes University	General				
SOAS, University of London	None at present		•Languages & literature •History	•Qur'an & Hadith studies* •Islamic & Middle Eastern law*	

* Research interests of current member of staff

7. MAPPING THE CURRENT SITUATION: REVIEW OF THEMES AND APPROACHES

Summary of Themes

From the summary of departmental profiles presented in section 6, there are six main themes and focuses that emerge from examining the current situation:

1. Languages and literature
2. History
3. Sufism
4. Politics
5. General teaching of Islamic Studies
6. Muslims in Britain

In most -- if not all -- cases, only a small cluster of these themes are taught within departments and centres as shown in the tables on pages 30 to 32 in section 6. As we look down this list of the six main themes it is clear that these very particularistic concerns are reflecting individual and perhaps institutional needs and priorities, some of which do not appear relevant to the contemporary challenges outlined in section 6.

It seems the field has been shaped in the past by foreign policy and the needs of Britain as a colonial power. This can be seen from the three governmental reports: the Reay Committee Report of 1909 which led to the establishment of SOAS in 1917; the Scarborough Committee Report of 1947; and the Hayter Committee Report of 1961. It seems that a number of the current themes and interests identified above are still reflecting the educational priorities set out in these Reports which date back to half a century and more ago. In particular, the centres which were the focus of the Hayter Report investment have tended to be the least adaptable to our contemporary needs. On the other hand, there has been a growth in the field but, perhaps ironically, outside these strategically established centres.

A final point worth noting is that the combination of all six of these themes together do not in fact meet the needs for effective teaching and debate on the study of Islam and Muslims in the contemporary world and there are significant gaps that need to be considered and addressed.

However, from the above list, it seems that there is a growing current interest in social science approaches which has led to the teaching of courses related to the Study of Islam and Muslims outside the traditional

departments of Arabic and Islamic Studies such as Sociology, Anthropology and Politics. This is indeed a positive move away from the traditional approaches which meet some of the needs of the twenty-first century.

We can trace this emergence of the Study of Islam and Muslims in Britain back to several developments. For example, the establishment of the Centre for the Study of Islam and Muslim-Christian Relations at Selly Oak in Birmingham in 1976 and the development of the Community Religions Project at the University of Leeds in the 1970s.

In addition, in the past ten years, there has been an intermittent Muslims in Britain Research Network in which the focus has predominantly been on the community religions model rather than on Christian-Muslim relations. With the establishment of Al-Maktoum Institute in 2001, a new centre was created in 2002 called the Centre for Research on Multiculturalism and Islam and Muslims in Scotland. This was then followed by the establishment of the Centre for the Study of Islam in the UK at Cardiff University in September 2005.

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Summary of Approaches

Alongside the six main themes given above, it is also possible to map out the field as clustered into the following seven different approaches:

1. Muslim Theology (traditionalist studies)
2. Orientalist Studies
3. Arabic and Islamic Studies
4. Middle Eastern Studies
5. Religious Studies
6. Politics and International Relations
7. The emergence of the Study of Islam and Muslims

The first issue that clearly emerges from this mapping is the diversity of approaches within the field. Although such diversity could be considered a strength and advantage if it were implemented within an interdisciplinary framework, what comes through in the current situation is a clear lack of engagement. Scholars and departments across these approaches tend to work in isolation from other areas and each one tries to protect and fight for their own corner.

The first three approaches on this list reflect the older and well-established centres and scholarship associated with the early twentieth century and before. The next three approaches (i.e. numbers 4 to 6) are

newer and have broadly emerged in the past thirty to forty years in particular, demonstrating more engagement with social science approaches. However, none of these approaches alone are able to provide the necessary training and research basis for addressing the contemporary challenges and needs.

In contrast, the field now needs to focus on the Study of Islam and Muslims combining the two elements: 1) the study of Islam and 2) the study of Muslims, with interaction between both and without restricting their approaches to Area Studies or Religious Studies.

The six main approaches are broadly clustered into two main institutional areas which, as noted above, are into:

- Middle Eastern Studies/Arabic and Islamic Studies
- Theology and Religious Studies

A number of issues related to these two specific subject areas can be identified as follows.

Problems in Religious Studies

Tokenism

As discussed in section 4, Islamic Studies has found itself in an uneasy position between centres of Religious Studies and Area Studies (i.e. Middle Eastern Studies and African Studies). Within Religious Studies contexts, Islamic Studies has largely tended to be included as one out of several major 'world religions' to be included in curricula largely for comparative purposes. A serious question emerges from this: how much is the teaching of Islam in such curricula driven by the needs of departments and centres solely to show inclusion? Although such inclusion of teaching and research shows recognition of Islam and Muslims as a significant minority (both locally and internationally), it can also be considered as a clear example of tokenistic multiculturalism. It does not address the local and national educational and social contexts and has no connection with the international development of the subject area.

Closures

Our researchers identified that there are currently four Religious Studies departments which previously had a specialist in Islamic Studies but which, due to staff changes, have failed to retain such specialism and are no longer able to provide full-time teaching in the subject area. These are the Universities of Stirling, Lancaster, Bristol and Gloucestershire.

In addition to this, a fifth university (Edinburgh) has similarly lost the specialist in Islamic Studies within Divinity and Religious Studies although in this case there is further provision elsewhere in the University.

These are very surprising developments, particularly because of the huge increase in public debate and interest in the Study of Islam and Muslims in the past five years and serious questions arise as to how this trend for downscaling Islamic Studies within Religious Studies has developed in the contemporary context.

One possible reason may be a widespread lack of institutional commitment to maintaining Islamic Studies as part of Theology/ Religious Studies programmes, despite the prominence of issues relating to Islam and Muslims. On the other hand, there are also certain recruitment issues involved; some departments have simply not managed to recruit due to a lack of suitable experts in Islamic Studies available. This relates back to the serious point that, if the field is well-established, why is it not producing enough home graduates and established scholars to sustain the field?

These developments also raise the serious question of whether, institutionally, the Study of Islam and Muslims should be so strongly located within the context of Theology and Religious Studies.

Problems in Middle Eastern Studies

According to the leadership of the British Society for Middle Eastern Studies (BRISMES), the main core problems in Middle Eastern Studies are the lack of funding (by HEFCE and research bodies) and staffing difficulties with senior staff retiring and institutional failure to replace them. In addition, BRISMES is narrowly focusing on languages and the need for linguists. This argument was made by BRISMES to the Foreign Office in 2002 which largely requested solutions to this crisis based on further large-scale funding. For example, with regard to a shortfall of recruitment from overseas, BRISMES asked the government to provide money to cover the shortfall of funds usually provided by overseas students.

It seems from the argument presented by BRISMES to the Foreign Office that they are not addressing the core issues of the field and they would like to adopt the status quo of the field and focus on the old agenda. The argument made by BRISMES as a professional body for Middle Eastern Studies, which is currently suffering a decline in membership, also

suggests that they are not addressing the challenges and needs of the twenty-first century.

The general problems of Middle Eastern Studies in the UK are:

- The need to change the agenda.
- The apparent decline in interest despite the post-9/11 climate.

As in the case of Religious Studies, these developments also raise the serious question of whether, institutionally, the Study of Islam and Muslims should be part of Middle Eastern Studies.

Problems with Muslim Institutions

- The Muslim College (London)
- The Institute of Ismaili Studies (London)
- The Aga Khan University (London)
- The International Colleges of Islamic Sciences (London)
- The Islamic College for Advanced Studies (London)
- The European Institute of Human Sciences (Ceredigion, Wales)
- The Markfield Institute of Higher Education (Leicestershire)
- London Open College (London)

These institutions have a faith association with their own particular religious education model. It seems that all these Muslim institutions have been established in this country at different times to cater for the specific needs of different Muslim religious and political communities (from the UK and abroad).

For example, the Muslim College was established by an Azharist scholar, the late Professor Zaki Badawi and is largely funded by Libya. The Markfield Institute of Higher Education developed out of, and is still based in, the Islamic Foundation in Leicester which has a strong connection and link with *al-Jama'a al-Islamiya* (*Jamaat-e-Islami*) in Pakistan and the Muslim Brothers in the Arab world. The European Institute of Human Sciences was established by the Muslim Brothers first in France, then in Wales. London Open College developed out of, and is based on, *Al-Muntada Al-Islami* in London which has a strong link with the *Salafi* movement in Saudi Arabia.

The International Colleges of Islamic Sciences and the Islamic College for Advanced Studies are Shi'ite institutions which have links with

movements in Iran, Iraq and Lebanon. The Institute of Ismaili Studies and the Aga Khan University are part of the worldwide Aga Khan Development Network funded by its patron, the Imam Aga Khan.

The development of these Muslim religious higher education institutions has raised among some academics two important questions. That is:

- Is it right to say that Islamic Studies can only be pursued by Muslims?
- Does Islamic Studies require a Muslim institution?

The authors of this report consider the answer to both questions definitely 'no'.

However, there are signs of an emergent trend in UK thinking and practice that privileges the appointment of Muslim scholars and the provision of Muslim institutions as appropriate developments in Islamic Studies. Some have argued previously that the poor quality of Islamic Studies historically, in terms of satisfying Muslim perspectives, derives directly from the non-representation of Muslims in academic faculties. For example, it was observed by Ahsan in 1981 that the majority of teaching staff in almost all departments on Islam and the Muslim world come from Jewish, Christian or other non-Muslim backgrounds. Similarly Mahdi in 1990 complained of the exclusion of Muslim scholars from the second edition of the *Encyclopedia of Islam* on the grounds, as he put it, that the publication was 'not a "Muslim Encyclopedia" or an encyclopedia for Muslims'. That is, 'it made no difference what Muslims thought of such an encyclopedia, whether they liked it or not, whether it agreed with their views of Islam or not, whether they saw themselves reflected in it or not'. However, Muslims of various backgrounds are now increasingly entering further and higher education as both students and staff, and there is now a view that Muslim religious leaders, i.e. imams or *ulama* may be seen by both Muslim and secular managers as better suited to Islamic Studies appointments.

It is largely within this context that a number of Muslim institutions have developed in Britain, and similarly some university departments have chosen the option of selecting Muslim teachers on the grounds of representativeness. These options may have the advantage of redressing an historical imbalance, and also of bringing Muslims academics into the development of the field. However, they could be unhelpful when they are no more than tokenism, and may have serious consequences if they encourage and establish educational separation and isolation of cultural and religious communities.

PART 3: TIME FOR CHANGE

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8. MAPPING THE FUTURE

As agendas normally change according to time and place, the challenges and opportunities of the twenty-first century are very different to those of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

The twenty-first century is diverse, multicultural and globalised. The missionary agenda has now given way to the principle of mutual respect and colonialism has now been superseded by independence; Muslim countries are now partners, not subjects. Muslims are also now at the heart of Western and European countries and cultures as settled and native-born European Muslims. The old one-way flow of colonial power has also been replaced by the requirement for two-way traffic in which people need to identify a common intellectual space of engagement.

At the same time, it is clear that scholarship both in Muslim countries and by Muslim academics needs to develop and respond to the changes and new contexts of this century and, in particular, to take up the responsibility for partnership and the mutual engagement that globalisation enables. In addition, the divorce between traditional Islamic Studies approaches and social sciences approaches needs to be recognised as an unhelpful and unacceptable separation which causes one of the major crises in Muslim countries.

On these bases, there is an urgent need for a new agenda to develop Islamic Studies into the Study of Islam and Muslims. This agenda should encourage us to build on the strengths of previous research and debate -- that is, the orientalist and traditionalist approaches -- but also to learn from the many previous mistakes.

The first part of this new agenda is the need for academic respect by all involved in this field. This is not about political correctness or tiptoeing around issues. For example, there are some issues in this field that must be dealt with sensitively. This has often been absent in much scholarship on Qur'anic revelation and 'authorship', and the authenticity of the traditions (Hadith) of Prophet Muhammad. There are no right or wrong scholarly arguments here, but there must be ways of discussing these issues that will *engage* with Muslims rather than cause alienation, otherwise we just end up with two camps of scholars who cannot talk with each other.

At the same time, the agenda must also challenge the more 'traditionally' focused styles and approaches to 'understanding Islam', which are often deeply faith-based. As the proliferation of Muslim institutions of learning

has shown, teaching on Islam is often structured on the assumption that it is only for Muslims, that non-Muslims are to be left out (or brought in on the hope of convincing). This field of study has to be open, actively challenging all involved to talk analytically about their assumptions -- both religious or otherwise. It is far too easy for Muslims to retreat to 'safe havens', to get surrounded by fellow believers, and see any scholarship beyond these safe zones as a threat. In a multicultural society, it is essential to move beyond this -- to work in a way which recognises the challenges of today.

And from these two issues, comes the crucial need for multiculturalism. The field has to create an 'open space' that brings people together in the same seminar or classroom. All sides must be willing to learn from each other and engage together in critical debate, on the basis of mutual respect. Scholars from different backgrounds urgently need to adopt a model of multicultural education in Islamic Studies.

Indeed, there is an urgent need to make the Study of Islam and Muslims accessible in multicultural British society in order to encourage engagement and understanding, and to breack down isolation, separation and alienation.

This report recognises that there are two current major trends within the field of Islamic Studies. One of these -- particularly associated with Muslim scholars -- is often heavily theological and is a narrow academic pursuit of 'faith seeking understanding'. The other approach, which is broadly associated with the development of orientalism, is less explicitly theological but often shows insensitivity and lack of engagement with scholars from Muslim religious backgrounds. Both approaches are very often associated with political and religious agendas.

Political and religious agendas and their activism and scholarship must be separated. Political movements -- religious or secular -- very often restrict the intellectual development of scholars and impose restrictions on their freedom of thought. To be taken seriously, any academic agenda should be taken away from religious or political agendas.

The report argues that Islamic Studies is difficult to define. The Study of Islam and Muslims is as much about Muslims (people, in society and in history) as it is about 'understanding Islam'. And indeed it is about both, since Muslim people are so often in the business of trying to live according to particular understandings of Islam. The Study of Islam and Muslims therefore has very wide interdisciplinary boundaries, including

History, Anthropology, Sociology, Political Studies, Religious Studies, Islamic Studies and many other disciplines.

Accordingly, the new agenda should be about how to change Islamic Studies into the Study of Islam and Muslims. There is a long way for this educational field to go; from where it is at present to where it needs to be. Our scholarship urgently needs to address the problems, challenges and opportunities of our diverse and fast-moving society.

As the scope of this report has not been able to include detailed consideration of curriculum development within the field of the Study of Islam and Muslims, the authors recognise that further research by academic educationalists is required to develop this issue. It is the aim of Al-Maktoum Institute to continue to take a leading role in such curriculum development.

On the other hand, the Study of Islam and Muslims cannot just be a side issue in British education and higher education. Too often, the issues raised in this field are relegated by institutions and policy makers to untouchable boxes on the margins of education. This report is highlighting the necessity for mainstreaming knowledge and understanding of Islam and Muslims at all levels of contemporary education in Britain.

In conclusion, there needs to be a coherent policy and strategy on the development of the field based on four important principles:

1. Facing the challenges and opportunities of the twenty-first century, particularly globalisation, multiculturalism and diversity.
2. Addressing the social and political needs of contemporary Britain to reflect the new realities of our society.
3. Establishing the new educational priorities of the country within national and global international contexts.
4. Interacting and engaging with scholarship on an international level; in particular, with Muslim scholars as partners, not subjects and based on mutual respect.

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9. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is the view of this report that the UK must respond to the new realities of our society. Therefore, this report encourages the government to review the current needs of the country and to set out the new educational priorities for teaching and research in the Study of Islam and Muslims in the UK.

Recommendation 1

Our society's needs are for all elements of society to be engaging within these debates and also with each other. Therefore, higher educational policy for the development of the Study of Islam and Muslims should strongly target the integration of people of all backgrounds together within this field.

Recommendation 2

To address the needs of the country, this report is identifying the study of Islam, along with the study of Muslims, in particular, the study of British Muslims and multiculturalism as priority subjects within our education system.

- As part of our multicultural society, there is a need for home scholars, British Muslims and non-Muslims, to study and engage in these debates and, in particular, to widen current academic concerns relating to the study of British Muslims. At the core of this are Muslim theological questions concerning Qur'anic interpretations and Muslim jurisprudence within the context of multicultural British life. These need to be encouraged and firmly located within British higher educational academic research.

- In addition, in order to understand the internal structures of Islam, to address the needs of British Muslims, and to avoid Muslims being isolated from mainstream British society and radicalised into adopting extreme views, this report recommends that there is a need to have a focus on the Study of Islam as a religion. In particular, the core Muslim sources and approaches should be studied academically within the context of multicultural higher education institutions.

Recommendation 3

The report recognises that there is no single methodology or approach, but is both interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary. Therefore, the report recommends that adopting interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary approaches in the Study of Islam and Muslims will indeed help to attract Muslim and non-Muslim students to engage in an intellectual debate which will help promote and foster a multicultural Britain, helping to promote integration and the development of common ground. Indeed, interdisciplinarity should not be viewed as a risk but a reward to students and society.

Recommendation 4

It is the view of this report that it is a mistake to include Islamic Studies under Middle Eastern Studies or Religious Studies. What we need is the emergence of a new agenda and vision for the Study of Islam and Muslims with new themes and approaches. To show an institutional commitment to the field:

1) There should be a separate RAE panel in the field of the Study of Islam and Muslims.
2) Islamic Studies should be separated from Theology and Religious Studies and Middle Eastern Studies and be established in its own right as the Study of Islam and Muslims.

This will encourage the British higher educational establishment to focus its scholarly activity in coherent units by establishing departments, schools and colleges in the Study of Islam and Muslims.

Recommendation 5

As there is no specific professional body for scholars working in the Study of Islam and Muslims, this report urges scholars in the field of the Study of Islam and Muslims to establish a new professional cross-cultural academic body for the field. This body should be open to all scholars who have an academic interest in the field; and in which both Muslims and non-Muslims can share together a common sense of purpose and belonging. Indeed, the differences between our cultural and religious backgrounds are what give strength and importance to this field of the study. The different cultural lenses that we each bring add to our pursuit of a common intellectual goal.

This new professional body may be called, for example, the British Association for the Study of Islam and Muslims (BASIM).

Recommendation 6

It is a problem for the country that a number of Muslim religious higher education institutions have their own international political links and agendas and choose to isolate themselves from mainstream British society and the higher education system. These institutions very often define their purposes as serving particular discrete Muslim sects or political communities rather than the wider needs of multicultural Britain.

Therefore, the report recommends that:

- A number of such Muslim religious higher education institutions should be firmly encouraged to integrate more actively into the British higher education system, particularly on issues of quality assurance and multicultural engagement with the wider society.

- Muslim religious higher education institutions should be encouraged to focus their activities on producing and training British Muslim imams and Muslim religious leaders who understand how to live in a multicultural Britain.

- The report recognises that the issue of Muslim religious educational institutions i.e. schools, colleges and institutions, is one that needs further investigation and review at government level. We urge the government to commission a study on these institutions and their place in the development of Islam and Muslims as an integral part of multicultural British society.

Recommendation 7

The crisis in Islamic Studies is not caused by a lack of funding and, accordingly, lobbying to obtain more funds is not going to lead to suitable solutions. The core issue of this crisis is the need to change the agenda; it is not enough to ask for more money without responding to, and reflecting on, the needs and the challenges of the twenty-first century. Therefore, this report recommends that the funding of teaching and research needs to be structured and strategically planned in order to address and meet the changes in the country's needs.

Recommendation 8

The narrowly-focused claim that university departments need to produce linguists is not the answer to our society's needs. The language priority could be addressed through non-academic, low-cost recruitment e.g. through British citizens in minority language communities. Therefore, the report recommends that the shortage of language skills could be addressed by using existing skills in our society and, in particular, by the second or third generations. This will also address changes in society and save governmental funds normally spent on teaching these languages. This would be in line with the need to prioritise limited educational resources to promote multicultural Britain and the enhancement of diversity, and to meet the urgent needs in our society.

Recommendation 9

The lack and decline of the number of young, home-grown British graduates and scholars in the Study of Islam and Muslims is a matter of serious concern and needs to be proactively addressed as a matter of urgency. This is to ensure that public debate, policy and education continue to have suitably educated human resources from all backgrounds. Therefore, a priority should be given to provide training for the next generation of British nationals (of all backgrounds) to take up posts at British universities.

APPENDICES

البروفيسور الدكتور
عبد الفتاح محمد العويسي المقدسي

البروفيسور الدكتور
عبد الفتاح محمد العويسي المقدسي

Appendix 1

LIST OF DEPARTMENTS/CENTRES

Scotland

1. The University of Aberdeen

- The Department of Divinity and Religious Studies (School of Divinity, History and Philosophy)

2. Al-Maktoum Institute

- Al-Maktoum Institute for Arabic and Islamic Studies
- The Centre for Islamicjerusalem Studies
- The Centre for Research on Multiculturalism and Islam and Muslims in Scotland

3. The University of Edinburgh

- The School of Divinity
- The Department of Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies (School of Literatures, Languages and Cultures)
- The Edinburgh Institute for the Study of the Arab World and Islam

4. The University of Glasgow

- Department of Theology and Religious Studies (incorporating the Centre for the Study of Islam)
- The Department of Sociology, Anthropology and Applied Social Sciences

5. The University of St Andrews

- The Department of Middle Eastern Studies (School of History)
- The School of International Relations (incorporating the Institute for Middle East, Central Asia and Caucasus Studies)

6. The University of Stirling

- The Department of Religious Studies (School of Languages, Cultures and Religions)

Wales

7. Cardiff University

- The School of Religious and Theological Studies (incorporating the Centre for the Study of Islam in the UK)

8. Trinity College, Carmarthen

- The School of Theology and Religious Studies

9. University of Wales, Lampeter

- The Department of Theology and Religious Studies

البروفيسور الدكتور
عبد الفتاح محمد العوسي القرشي

North England

10. The University of Central Lancashire

- The Department of Education and Social Science

11. The University of Chester

- The Department of Theology and Religious Studies

12. Durham University

- The Institute for Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies (School of Government and International Affairs)
- The School of Modern Languages and Cultures

13. Lancaster University

- The Department of Religious Studies

14. The University of Leeds

- The Department of Theology and Religious Studies (School of Humanities)
- The Department of Arabic and Middle Eastern Studies (School of Modern Languages and Cultures)
- The School of Politics and International Studies

15. The University of Manchester

- The Department of Middle Eastern Studies (School of Languages, Linguistics and Cultures)

16. Manchester Metropolitan University

- The Department of Politics and Philosophy

South West England

17. The University of Bristol

- The Department of Theology and Religious Studies

18. The University of Exeter

- The Institute of Arab and Islamic Studies (School of Humanities and Social Sciences)
- The Department of Politics (School of Humanities and Social Sciences)

19. The University of Gloucestershire

- The Department of Humanities (Faculty of Education, Humanities and Sciences)

South East England

20. Birkbeck, University of London

- The Faculty of Continuing Education

21. The University of Birmingham

- The Department of Theology and Religion (incorporating the Centre for the Study of Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations)

22. The University of Cambridge

- The Faculty of Oriental Studies
- The Centre of Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies
- The Faculty of Divinity

23. King's College, London

- The Department of Theology and Religious Studies

24. The University of Nottingham

- The Department of Theology and Religious Studies (School of Humanities)
- The Institute for Middle Eastern Studies

25. The Open University

- The Department of Religious Studies

26. The University of Oxford

- Near and Middle Eastern Studies (within the Faculty of Oriental Studies)
- The Middle East Centre (St Antony's College)
- The Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies

27. Oxford Brookes University

- The Wesley Centre, Oxford (within the Westminster Institute of Education)

28. The School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London

- The Department of the Study of Religions (The Faculty of Arts and Humanities)

- The Department of the Languages and Cultures of the Near and Middle East (The Faculty of Languages and Cultures)
- The Centre of Islamic Studies
- The London Middle East Institute
- The Centre of Islamic and Middle Eastern Law

Muslim Institutions

29. The Muslim College

- The Muslim College

30. The Institute of Ismaili Studies

- The Institute of Ismaili Studies

31. The Aga Khan University

- The Institute for the Study of Muslim Civilisations

32. International Colleges of Islamic Sciences

- International Colleges of Islamic Sciences

33. The Islamic College for Advanced Studies

- The Islamic College for Advanced Studies

34. The European Institute of Human Sciences

- The European Institute of Human Sciences

35. The Markfield Institute of Higher Education

- The Markfield Institute of Higher Education

36. London Open College

- London Open College

البروفيسور الدكتور
عبد الفتاح محمد العويسي المقدسي

Appendix 2

The Current Situation: Departmental Profiles

(Islamic Studies, Religious Studies, and Middle Eastern Studies in British Universities: 2004-2006)

البروفيسور الدكتور
عبد الفتاح محمد العويسي المقدسي

Scotland

البروفيسور الدكتور
عبد الفتاح محمد العويسي المقدسي

The University of Aberdeen

1. Name of Centre/Department

- The Department of Divinity and Religious Studies

2. Address

University of Aberdeen
King's College
Aberdeen
AB24 3FX

www.abdn.ac.uk

3. Date of Establishment and Background of Department

In Aberdeen, theological study and learning go back to the Foundation Bull, granted by Pope Alexander VI in 1495.

Historically, Christian theology and eccelesiology have dominated Divinity at Aberdeen, as in the other ancient Scottish universities, although there has been a recent concentration upon Anthropology in the Religious Studies section. In 2005-2006, the University of Aberdeen appointed several new posts people working in the field of the Study of Islam and Muslims, in International Relations, French Studies, and Anthropology.

4. Programmes Offered (UG and PG) or the Programmes to which their Courses Contribute

Undergraduate:

- MA in Religious Studies
- MA in Divinity
- Bachelor of Divinity (BD)
- Bachelor of Theology (BTh)

Islam is taught in the following modules:

- Basics of World Religions (level 1)
- Understanding Islam: an Anthropological Perspective (level 2, taught every other year)
- Islam Observed (level 4)

Postgraduate:

- MLitt in Social Anthropology of Religion

Features the following module: 'Anthropological Readings on Specific Religious Traditions' (choice of Hinduism, Islam, Judaism and Buddhism)

5. Student Numbers

60-70 students take 'Basics of World Religions' at Level 1. 'Understanding Islam' at Level 2 is a new course recruiting approximately10-15 students per year.

6. Student Profile

Students at Aberdeen are mainly white and middle class, mostly (Protestant) Christians. Gender balance in the 2003-04 session was around 60 per cent women, 40 per cent men.

Al-Maktoum Institute for Arabic and Islamic Studies

1. Name of Centre/Department

- Al-Maktoum Institute for Arabic and Islamic Studies (programmes validated by the University of Aberdeen)
- The Centre for Islamicjerusalem Studies
- The Centre for Research on Multiculturalism and Islam and Muslims in Scotland

2. Address

Al-Maktoum Institute for Arabic and Islamic Studies
124 Blackness Road
Dundee DD1 5PE
Scotland

www.almi.abdn.ac.uk

3. Date of Establishment and Background of Department

Al-Maktoum Institute was established in 2001 as a research-led, postgraduate institution of higher education. It offers postgraduate taught Masters and research programmes in Islamic Studies and Islamicjerusalem Studies validated by the University of Aberdeen. Al-Maktoum Institute is an independent institute whose patron is HH Shaikh Hamdan Bin Rashid Al-Maktoum, Deputy Ruler of Dubai and the United Arab Emirates Minister for Finance and Industry.

4. Programmes Offered (UG and PG) or the Programmes to which their Courses Contribute

Postgraduate:

- MLitt (Taught Masters) in Islamic Studies
- MLitt (Taught Masters) in Islamicjerusalem Studies
- PhD by research

5. Student Numbers

In the MLitt course, there are usually 10-15 students per year and there are approximately 25 students completing PhDs.

6. Student Profile

Students from a range of countries including: the Arab Gulf region and other parts of the Arab world; South East Asia; South Asia; Europe; and the UK. The Institute is planning to balance its student profile by having 50% home students (UK and European students) and 50% international students.

The University of Edinburgh

1. Name of Centre/Department

- The School of Divinity
- The Department of Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies
- The Edinburgh Institute for the Study of the Arab World and Islam (first called the Edinburgh Institute for the Advanced Study of Islam and the Middle East)

2. Address

University of Edinburgh
Old College
South Bridge
Edinburgh
EH8 9YL

www.ed.ac.uk

3. Date of Establishment and Background of Department

Arabic has been taught in Edinburgh since 1880. Students have been attracted to the study of the classical languages and cultures of the Middle East as early as the second half of the eighteenth century. In the nineteenth century, as in the eighteenth, Arabic primarily attracted theological students. Teaching in these areas is currently based only in the Department of Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies, although the School of Divinity makes use of some of the Department's courses in its BA/MA in Religious Studies and previously had a specialist teaching in the area of Islamic Studies. The main research and teaching focus of the Department of Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies is the languages, literature and cultures of Arabic, Persian and Turkish.

There is also the Edinburgh Institute for the Study of the Arab World and Islam (established in October 1997, it was named the Edinburgh Institute for the Advanced Study of Islam and the Middle East) which is a cross-faculty research centre whose aim is to consolidate and promote the study of Islam and the Middle East on an interdisciplinary basis.

4. Programmes Offered (UG and PG) or the Programmes to which their Courses Contribute

Undergraduate:

In the Department of Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies:

- MA in Arabic (single or joint honours)
- MA in Persian (joint honours only with another Humanities subject)

In the School of Divinity:

- BA/MA in Religious Studies

Including the modules:
Islamic History
Arabic Language

Postgraduate:

In the Department of Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies:

- MSc/Dip in Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies
- MSc/Dip in Arab and Muslim Diaspora Studies
- PhD/MLitt/MSc in Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies
- MSc/Dip (taught or by research) in Translation Studies (Arabic, Turkish)
- PhD by Research

In the School of Divinity:

- MSc (by research) in Religious Studies
- PhD in Religious Studies
- (The Department of Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies can co-supervise Islamic Studies topics)

5. Student Numbers

The Department of Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies:

In 2004, there were approximately 30 students in the undergraduate programme however, according to Andrew Newman, Head of the Department, this usually drops to 10 or 15 at the end of the second year when students have to decide their Honours programme. In 2004, there were 11 students in Persian

6. Student Profile

The Department of Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies:

According to Andrew Newman, the undergraduates are overwhelmingly British, mainly English; although there has been an influx of Scots in the last couple of years (there is a growing interest amongst Scots). At the postgraduate level, the student body is mainly international, from Europe, Russia, Turkey, the Arab world, Malaysia, Japan, the US and Africa.

There is a balance in Edinburgh between Muslim and Non-Muslim students (including from overseas), which results in a reasonable mix -- from Canada, the US, Spain, Africa -- although there were more Muslims in 2003. They discourage people who have the language as their native tongue. Local Muslims do not apply to Edinburgh; they tend to go to Glasgow. Scottish students usually come from smaller parts of the country.

7. Comments by Head of Department

Andrew Newman, Head of the Department of Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies at Edinburgh, explained that his department offers a four year degree, mainly in language, and the emphasis is on Arabic and Persian. The third year is spent away (either in Cairo or Iran). In addition, the department offers study of culture, history, religion etc. Language is regarded as a tool to access other aspects.

8. Comments from the Website of the University of Edinburgh

According to the University of Edinburgh website, Edinburgh's present reputation in the field of Islamic Studies is inseparable from the name of William Montgomery Watt.

'Following Professor Watt's retirement (1979) there was, for a short time, a period of uncertainty surrounding the precise foundations on which the edifice of Islamic studies would stand in the future. Professor Watt's chair had been a personal chair -- a mark of recognition of his scholarship. There was therefore no post to which there could be automatic succession. But the cloud of uncertainty […] was soon to be dispelled: the University of Baghdad provided a handsome endowment to establish a permanent professorial post […]. In 1982 the new post, designated the Iraq Chair of Arabic and Islamic Studies, was duly filled. The first holder of the chair was Professor J D Latham, a well-known expert on Islamic Spain, who retired in 1988 […]. In October 1999, the University elected Professor M Y Suleiman to the Chair of Arabic and Islamic Studies'.[1]

[1] www.arts.ed.ac.uk/eisawi/history.html

The University of Glasgow

1. Name of Centre/Department

- Department of Theology and Religious Studies (incorporating the Centre for the Study of Islam)
- The Department of Sociology, Anthropology and Applied Social Sciences

2. Address

No. 4 The Square
University of Glasgow
G12 8QQ

www.gla.ac.uk

3. Date of Establishment and Background of Department

Islam is taught at Glasgow at two sites. The principle site is the Theology and Religious Studies Department. It is also taught as an aspect of an Honours Anthropology of Religion course in the Department of Sociology, Anthropology and Applied Social Sciences. The Centre for the Study of Islam was founded in 1998 and is based within the Department of Theology and Religious Studies.

During the late 1980s and early 1990s, there was a Department of Arabic and Islamic Studies at Glasgow, staffed solely by Professor John Mattock. The Department functioned at postgraduate research level where Professor Mattock supervised research in very broad areas related to Arabic and Islamic Studies. The Department closed around 1994/1995 and the University established a post within Theology and Religious Studies.

4. Programmes Offered (UG and PG) or the Programmes to which their Courses Contribute

Undergraduate:

Department of Theology and Religious Studies

- MA in Religious Studies
- Bachelor of Divinity

The following courses feature Islam:

Level 1:

- World Religions (Islam, Christianity and Judaism)
- Arabic level 1

Level 2:

- Arabic Texts
- Modern Islamic Politics
- Religious Studies (Islam, Christianity and Judaism)
- Islam: Gender, Ethics and Pluralism

Honours:

- Persian Culture and Civilisation
- Islamic and Eastern Mystical Traditions
- Psalms and the Qur'an

Department of Sociology, Anthropology and Applied Social Sciences

Aspects of Islam within an Honours Anthropology of Religion option, particularly from an ethnographic and anthropologised/ sociologised perspective

Postgraduate:

Department of Theology and Religious Studies

- PhD, MLitt, MTh (research) in Islamic Studies

Department of Sociology, Anthropology and Applied Social Sciences

None

5. Student Numbers

'World Religions', 'Religious Studies' and Arabic language teaching: 15-20 students.

'Modern Islamic Thought and Politics' and 'Islam: Gender, Ethics and Pluralism': around 30 students.

'Persian Culture and Civilisation', 'Islamic and Eastern Mystical Traditions' and 'The Psalms and Qur'an': 5-15 students.

6. Student Profile

In the Department of Theology and Religious Studies, the student body is predominantly British and 50/50 male/female.

In the Department of Sociology, Anthropology and Applied Social Science, students are largely white Scottish, working and middle class, many from the local west of Scotland catchment area.

البروفيسور الدكتور
عبد الفتاح محمد العويسي المقدسي

The University of St Andrews

1. Name of Centre/Department

- The Department of Middle Eastern Studies (School of History)
- The School of International Relations (incorporating the Institute for Middle East, Central Asia and Caucasus Studies)

2. Address

University of St Andrews
St Andrews
Fife
Scotland
KY16 9AL

www.st-andrews.ac.uk

3. Date of Establishment and Background of Department

The Department of Middle Eastern Studies incorporates both Arabic and Middle Eastern Studies. It includes staff with specialisms in the Arabic language; mediaeval and modern Arabic literature; and the history, religion, ethnography, politics, economics, business, international relations and security in the Middle East.

At the School of History, Arab and Middle Eastern Studies is a sub department of the school. Arabic is taught here and also an introduction to the Middle East and Arabic literature. In the School of International Relations, there is an undergraduate degree in International Relations and a graduate degree in Middle East and Central Asian Security Studies and within these there are modules on the Middle East. The Middle East Studies degree does not require Arabic.

4. Programmes Offered (UG and PG) or the Programmes to which their Courses Contribute

Undergraduate:
Department of Middle Eastern Studies:

- MA in Arabic and Middle East Studies (Single Honours)
- MA in Middle East Studies with Arabic (Single Honours)

Or Arabic or Middle East Studies in combination with a wide range of other subjects taught in the Faculty of Arts.

Modules available in International Relations:

- State Formation in the Middle East (third year)
- Political Economy of the Middle East (third year)
- International Relations of the Middle East (fourth year)

Postgraduate:
In the Institute for Middle East, Central Asia and Caucasus Studies (Department of International Relations):

- MLitt in Middle East and Central Asian Security Studies
- MLitt/ Graduate Diploma/MPhil/PhD in Middle Eastern History

5. Student Numbers

After 11 September 2001, there was a "spectacular increase" in students for International Relations and Arabic; there used to be 16-20 students but there are now 40.

6. Student Profile

At undergraduate level, the student body is roughly evenly divided between UK and non-UK -- 20 per cent North American, a good number from Europe, some from East Asia and not many from the Middle East itself. There are a reasonable number of Scottish students (half of the UK intake) but they are not from the immediate vicinity. In 2004, at MLitt level, there was on UK student, one German, one Swede and one Iranian. At PhD level in International Relations, there were two Japanese students, two Germans, one Italian, one Swede and one Egyptian.

The University of Stirling

1. Name of Centre/Department

- The Department of Religious Studies

2. Address

University of Stirling
Stirling
FK9 4LA
Scotland

www.stir.ac.uk

3. Date of Establishment and Background of Department

The Department of Religious Studies was founded in 1973 and includes courses on the study of Islam and Muslims within its programmes. There is a 'very strong interest' in Islam at Stirling, this in part reflects the fact that Islam is a necessary component for the Stirling Religious Education teaching qualification, with around 70 per cent of Religious Studies Honours degree students going on to school teaching.

Recent staff turnover, declining enrolments and restructuring have created difficulties for Religious Studies at Stirling, and provision of Islam has inevitably become caught up in this. There is currently no full-time specialist in Islamic Studies.

4. Programmes Offered (UG and PG) or the Programmes to which their Courses Contribute

Undergraduate:

- BA in Religious Studies

Between 1995 and 2002, students could take the following specific modules in semesters 5-8:

- Islam as a Way of Life
- Political Islam
- Islamic Jerusalem

Postgraduate:
Islamic Studies is not available at postgraduate level

5. Student Numbers

There are typically around 30 students enrolled for level 3 / 4 courses.

6. Student Profile

Strongly white and British (similar to the University as a whole).

Wales

البروفيسور الدكتور
عبد الفتاح محمد العويسي المقدسي

Cardiff University

1. Name of Centre/Department

- The School of Religious and Theological Studies (incorporating the Centre for the Study of Islam in the UK)

2. Address

Cardiff University
CF10 3XQ
Wales
UK

www.cardiff.ac.uk

3. Date of Establishment and Background of Department

Islam is taught as part of the Religious Studies strand within the Department of Religious and Theological Studies. This has developed in part out of Cardiff's historical expertise in Patristics and Semitic languages. The Centre for the Study of Islam in the UK (CSI-UK) was launched in September 2005.

4. Programmes Offered (UG and PG) or the Programmes to which their Courses Contribute

Undergraduate:

- BA (Honours) in Religious and Theological Studies (Single Honours)
- BA (Honours) in Religious Studies plus another Humanities subject (Joint Honours)

Featuring the following modules on Islam:

- Islam in the Contemporary World
- Early Islam

Postgraduate:

- MA in Religious Studies
- MA/Diploma in Islam in Contemporary Britain
- MPhil and PhD awards also available

5. Student Numbers

'Islam in the Contemporary World': typically around 50 students
'Early Islam': typically around 20 students

6. Student Profile

Students are predominantly UK based, with a significant minority from South Wales and 75 per cent are women. Students are of mixed social class and religious affiliations; the vast majority are white British/English.

Trinity College, Carmarthen
University of Wales

1. Name of Centre/Department

- The School of Theology and Religious Studies

2. Address

Trinity College
Carmarthen
SA31 3EP
Wales

www.trinity-cm.ac.uk

3. Date of Establishment and Background of Department

Trinity is the second oldest institution of higher education in Wales, having been founded in 1848 to train teachers for Church schools. Although Trinity is, historically, a teacher training institution, it has extended its range of courses dramatically, so that, in addition to courses for teacher training, it now also offers Single, Joint and Combined Studies BA degrees and a variety of BSc and higher degrees.

4. Programmes Offered (UG and PG) or the Programmes to which their Courses Contribute

Undergraduate:

- BA (Honours) in Religious Studies

  Includes: an introduction to all the major world religions: Christianity, Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism and Sikhism

- BA (Honours) in Religious Education

  Includes: detailed introductions to Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism and Sikhism

Postgraduate:

- PGCE Secondary -- Religious Education

University of Wales, Lampeter

1. Name of Centre/Department

- The Department of Theology and Religious Studies

2. Address

University of Wales
Lampeter
Ceredigion
SA48 7ED
Wales

www.lamp.ac.uk

3. Date of Establishment and Background of Department

The University is the smallest in Europe but the Department of Theology and Religious Studies is one of the largest. Until recently, the department at Lampeter was unique in the UK in incorporating Islamic Studies into its title (as the Department of Theology, Religious and Islamic Studies). It offers a Single or Joint Honours BA degree in Islamic Studies.

4. Programmes Offered (UG and PG) or the Programmes to which their Courses Contribute

Undergraduate:

- BA in Religious Studies: including Islam as a 'World Religion'
- BA (single or joint honours) in Islamic Studies

  Compulsory modules at level 1 Islamic Studies are: 'The Life of Muhammad', 'The Rise of Islam', 'Islamic Doctrine', 'Qur'an and Hadith', 'Study of Religion'.

  Modules at Level 2 and 3 include: 'Islamic Sources: Qur'an', 'Islamic Sources: Hadith', 'Shari'ah: Law and Jurisprudence', 'Islam in the Contemporary World', 'Understanding the Palestinian Question', 'The Writing of Islamic History'.

  Arabic language taught at levels 1-3

Postgraduate:

- MA in Islamic Studies
- MA in The World's Religions: including the module: 'Islam Today'
- PhD/MPhil in Islamic Studies: including Islamic Law; Finance and Islam; Islamic Movements; Middle Eastern Politics; Islamic History; and Islamic Architecture and Heritage.

North England

البروفيسور الدكتور
عبد الفتاح محمد العويسي المقدسي

The University of Central Lancashire

1. Name of Centre/Department

- The Department of Education and Social Science

2. Address

University of Central Lancashire
Preston
Lancashire
PR1 2HE

www.uclan.ac.uk

3. Date of Establishment and Background of Department

A programme of Islamic Studies with a strong local and practical emphasis has been offered at the University of Central Lancashire as a Minor Honours option in the Department of Education and Social Science Combined Honours programme, since validation in 2002. The Islamic Studies programme at the University of Central Lancashire synthesises elements of a faith-based Islamic Studies model with sociological and cultural studies approaches to Islam. Both are given a practical, 'applied' focus through local recruitment within the Muslim community in the Preston area.

4. Programmes Offered (UG and PG) or the Programmes to which their Courses Contribute

Undergraduate:

- Islamic Studies (Combined and Joint Honours subject)
- University Certificate in Islamic Studies: a short, part-time course for adult learners

Postgraduate:

None

5. Student Numbers

The programme had by 2004 more than 40 students for 3 years intake.

6. Student Profile

There is local recruitment within the Muslim community in the Preston area.

7. Comments by Dr Mahmood Chandia

Mahmood Chandia presents the resultant hybrid profile of the University of Central Lancashire Islamic Studies programme as a real strength: it is community/grassroots-orientated, practical and interactive, drawing on both traditional Islamic Studies academic resources and methodologies and *madrasa*-based perspectives. The level 3 course, 'Observing Islam in Practice' (compulsory), cements the local, practical focus: it is based on placements in local Muslim institutions and contexts in northwest England -- for example, Muslim girls' school in Preston, Lancashire Council of Mosques in Blackburn, local mosques and *madrasas*, local branches of Islamic charities like Muslim Aid and Islamic Relief.

The University of Chester

1. Name of Centre/Department

The Department of Theology and Religious Studies

2. Address

University of Chester
Parkgate Road
Chester
CH1 4BJ

www.chester.ac.uk

3. Date of Establishment and Background of Department

The Religious Studies programme was set up in 2001. Chester was originally a Church of England training college for ordinands, and subsequently a college for training Anglican RE school teachers. The latter function has moved into Education, leaving the Department of Theology and Religious Studies free to focus on Theology and Religious Studies. Islamic Studies is taught at all three levels of the undergraduate programme.

4. Programmes Offered (UG and PG) or the Programmes to which their Courses Contribute

Undergraduate:

- BA in Religious Studies (Single Honours)
- BA in Theology and Religious Studies (Combined Honours)

Modules featuring Islam are:

- Encountering Religion: Hinduism and Islam (level 1)
- Aspects of Contemporary Islam (level 2)

Islam appears in a range of thematic modules such as:

- Exploring Spiritualities (level 3)
- Religion and Fundamentalisms (level 3)

- BTh in Theology (Single Honours)

Modules featuring Islam are:

- Encountering Religion: Hinduism and Islam (level 1)
- Religion and Fundamentalisms (level 3)

Postgraduate:

- MTh in Applied Theology

Features the module:

- Women and Religion: Islam and Christianity

5. Student Numbers

Around 45 students take the level 1 course 'Encountering Religion: Hinduism and Islam'. 5-20 students take the level 2 course 'Aspects of Contemporary Islam'.

6. Student Profile

Most students (4:1 or 5:1) are female, almost entirely white British, and with a strong local northwest England base. There is a strong Christian representation amongst students, who are attracted to the College's historical Anglican background as well as to the Department's contemporary ethos of 'academically challenging but faith affirming'. However, a 'good proportion' of Chester's students practice no religion.

7. Comments by Professor Ron Geaves

Current teaching plans under consideration by the Religious Studies subject group include creating a Muslim strand to the existing 2 year Diploma in Christian Youth Work, and exploring the possibility of creating a (secular) Religious Studies training course for imams, focused on social and pastoral aspects of the role (drawing on Chester's expertise as an Anglican college for church and teaching).

Durham University

1. Name of Centre/Department

- The Institute for Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies (School of Government and International Affairs)
- The School of Modern Languages and Cultures

2. Address

Durham University
University Office
Old Elvet
Durham
DH1 3HP

www.dur.ac.uk

3. Date of Establishment and Background of Department

From the University's foundation in 1832, the study of the languages and literature of the Middle East has formed part of the study of theology. Later, the study of Arabic developed in its own right. Durham's Centre for Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies was set up in 1962. Originally IMEIS had no teaching role but served to encourage, co-ordinate and support the relevant activities of departments with strong Middle Eastern interests. In 1988, following the reorganisation of Oriental Studies in Durham, the Institute, in addition to its previous activities, became a teaching department in its own right with responsibility for undergraduate and postgraduate degree couses in Arabic, Middle Eastern History, and Islamic Studies.

A major expansion occurred in 1993 with the appointment of a number of Social Science staff with expertise in Politics and International Relations, followed by new appointments in History and Islamic Art. Since 2004, IMEIS now only offers study at postgraduate level. The study of Arabic at undergraduate level has been transferred to the School of Modern Languages.

Islamic Studies was also taught as part of the 'Theology and Religious Studies' programme in the University of Newcastle. In 2004-2005, these programmes were transferred to the Department of Theology and Religion of the University of Durham. However, there is currently no teaching of Islamic Studies in this department.

4. Programmes Offered (UG and PG) or the Programmes to which their Courses Contribute

Undergraduate:
School of Modern Languages and Cultures

- BA in Arabic language

Postgraduate:
School of Modern Languages and Cultures

- MA in Arabic/English Translation
- MA in Arabic Literature

School of Government and International Affairs

- MA in Politics
- MA in International Relations
- MA in International Studies

All have Middle East modules:

- International Relations and Security in the Middle East
- Politics, Government and Civil Society in the Middle East
- The Political Economy of the Development in the Middle East
- Islamic Political Economy and Shariah Compliant Finance
- Islam and Politics: Issues in Contemporary Muslim Thought

- PhD in Arabic and Middle East Studies

There is also an Islamic finance summer school

5. Student Numbers

Around 50 MA Students.

6. Student Profile

At MA level, about 80 per cent are international students. Many undergraduates studying Arabic are from the schools Arabic programme; some are from the army, public schools and children from mixed marriages. There are not many British Muslims. One reason for this is that they do not teach Islam in a proselytising way. Another is that Durham is regarded as a somewhat elite school. They would like to have a local recruitment base and are supposed to be recruiting students from less well-off areas, but many students are reluctant to study Arabic.

The core recruitment of IMEIS is from Saudi Arabia and the Gulf region in general. There are also students from Malaysia attracted by the Islamic Banking and Finance course, and from Europe, where modern Middle Eastern Studies is less available.

7. Comments by Dr Emma Murphy

Dr Emma Murphy, a Senior Lecturer at the Institute for Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies, explained that, in August 2004, the Institute was transformed from an undergraduate and postgraduate to a postgraduate-only institute. It is ESRC recognized and teaches Islamic Studies, Islamic Economics and Finance within the School of Government and International Affairs (SGIA). Arabic was taught in the department until summer of 2004 and has now been re-located to the School of Modern Languages. As a result of the transfer and the demand for higher grades, student numbers have dropped.

البروفيسور الدكتور
عبد الفتاح محمد العويسي المقدسي

Lancaster University

1. Name of Centre/Department

The Department of Religious Studies

2. Address.

Lancaster University
Bailrigg
Lancaster
LA1 4YW

www.lancs.ac.uk

3. Date of Establishment and Background of Department

Religious Studies has been taught at Lancaster since 1968.Thus Islam has been largely been taught here in a syllabus that is illustrative of the changing concerns and fashions of Religious Studies in Europe and North America over the last 35 years. However, between 1972 and 1982 a separate Department of Arabic and Islamic Studies had existed at Lancaster funded through monies from Kuwait. This has a classical philological-textual focus. There is currently no full-time specialist in Islamic Studies.

4. Programmes Offered (UG and PG) or the Programmes to which their Courses Contribute

Undergraduate:

- BA Religious Studies

Includes the modules:

- Religion, Life and Experience (including Islam)
- Traditions and transformations II: Judaism, Christianity and Islam
- Islam
- Origins of Islam
- Issues in Contemporary Islam

Postgraduate:

- MA Religious Studies

Includes the modules:

- Classical Islam
- Modern Islamic Thought

5. Student Numbers

BA courses have averaged 36 students for 'Classical Islam' and 28 students for 'Modern Islamic Thought' over the last three 'runs'. The MA courses show a marked leap in popularity -- a 3-fold increase in uptake -- post 9/11, from low single figures to double figures.

6. Student Profile

Students are largely British, 60/40 female/male, of middling social class and with mixed religious affiliations; they come to Lancaster on the basis of the RS department's general reputation, rather than for Islam *per se*.

The University of Leeds

1. Name of Centre/Department

- The Department of Theology and Religious Studies (School of Humanities)
- The Department of Arabic and Middle Eastern Studies (School of Modern Languages and Cultures)
- The School of Politics and International Studies

2. Address

University of Leeds
Leeds
LS2 9JT

www.leeds.ac.uk

3. Date of Establishment and Background of Department

At least one module on Islam has been regularly taught within Theology and Religious Studies at Leeds since the 1960s. Since the mid-1980s Islam has been taught as an aspect of UK religious life within the Leeds 'community religions' programme. There are also programmes and courses in Arabic Studies and Middle Eastern Studies provided by the Institute for Politics and International Studies and the Department of Arabic and Middle Eastern Studies.

4. Programmes Offered (UG and PG) or the Programmes to which their Courses Contribute

Undergraduate:

Department of Theology and Religious Studies

- BA in Theology and Religious Studies

Islam features in the following modules:

Level 1

- Religion in Modern Britain
- Varieties of Religion in Modern African Society
- Religious Lives

Levels 2 and 3

- Islam
- Islam in the Modern World
- Sufism
- Muslims, Multiculturalism and the State

Department of Arabic and Middle Eastern Studies

- BA Honours in Middle Eastern Studies
- BA Honours Arabic and Islamic Studies
- BA Honours Arabic Studies
- BA Honours Arabic Studies and Middle Eastern Studies
- BA Honours Islamic Studies
- BA Joint Honours Arabic

Institute for Politics and International Studies

None

Postgraduate:

Department of Theology and Religious Studies

- Diploma/MA in 'Islam, Modernity and Politics'

MA (by research)/MPhil/PhD degrees also available, especially on the subject of contemporary Islamic and Indian traditions, including modern and pre-modern developments in Sufism

Department of Arabic and Middle Eastern Studies

- MA in Applied Translation Studies (Arabic/English)
- MA in Applied Interpreting Studies (Arabic/English)

- MA (by research)/MPhil/PhD degrees also available

Institute for Politics and International Studies
MA in Terrorism and Security (*includes the module:* 'Contemporary Politics of the Middle East')

5. Student Numbers

Theology and Religious Studies
Religion in Modern Britain: around 90 students
Islam: 30-40 students
Islam in the Modern World: around 20 students
Muslims, Multiculturalism and the State: around 10 students

Diploma/MA in Islam, Modernity and Politics: around 5 students

Arabic and Middle Eastern Studies
None

Politics and International Studies
Contemporary Politics of the Middle East: approximately 20 students (16 in 2004)
Israel: Politics and Society: approximately 90 students
(Figures accurate for 2003-2004)

6. Student Profile

Theology and Religious Studies

The student body is largely England-based at undergraduate level, including good representation from 'local' northwest and west midlands of England, and from motorway corridors feeding into Leeds. At postgraduate level it is more evenly balanced, with a mix of international students. Students are 70/30 female/male, mainly white, a mix of upper working class and established middle class, and with a very wide range of religious affiliation, including Christian, 'none' and 'other'.

Arabic and Middle Eastern Studies
Profile not available

Politics and International Studies
A module on Contemporary Politics attracts approximately 20 students. They recruit heavily for the Israel module -- there are about 90 students. On balance, the Israel module contained 80 per cent home students (including EU), from all over the UK; however, the majority came from outside Yorkshire. At MA level, they had approximately 60 per cent home and the rest overseas (mainly from the Indian subcontinent, Japan, China); there were some Arab students.

On the Contemporary Politics course, out of 16 students, five were British Muslims. In terms of local recruitment, the University operates outreach programmes and has been fairly successful at recruiting, including among the local Muslim community. But he would like to see more female Muslim students as they are currently underrepresented. Otherwise, the gender balance is roughly even.

In terms of ethnicity, the students are 70 per cent white Anglo-Saxon. Traditionally, the University attracts quite a lot of Jewish students (mostly from London and Manchester rather than Leeds itself). The Israel module attracts large numbers of Jewish students from across the University. The students tend to be very middle-class.
(Figures accurate for 2003-2004)

7. Comments from Dr Clive Jones

He used to run a Middle East studies programme but found it impossible to operate a coherent programme with only two people. Unless the university is willing to invest time and resources, he remarked, it is just not worth trying to run such a programme (it ended in summer 2002). However, he would be keen to re-institute it, as there is a need for it; but they would have to invest in another lecturer in Middle East studies (it is unlikely that they will decide until the next RAE).

The University of Manchester

1. Name of Centre/Department

- The Department of Middle Eastern Studies

2. Address

The University of Manchester
Oxford Road
Manchester
M13 9PL

www.manchester.ac.uk

3. Date of Establishment and Background of Department

The Department of Middle East Studies is primarily a language department; this is their main activity. They teach the four main languages of the Middle East: Arabic, Persian, Turkish and Hebrew (this is the only department to teach all four). The department's second string is history -- they have a modern Middle Eastern history degree. Altogether, they have six degree programmes, most of which are language based except for the history degree (which is a mixture of international and the modern Middle East).
In 2000, the university totally restructured the degree programme. In the past, they had only four-year degrees (which included one year abroad, spent in Alexandria). They have now introduced a three-year degree in addition (without the year abroad); there are economic and other reasons for this, but it means that students now have a choice. The Modern History degree was introduced around ten years ago. The language approach has been modernised.

4. Programmes Offered (UG and PG) or the Programmes to which their Courses Contribute

Undergraduate

4 year BA (Honours) in:

- Middle Eastern Studies and Modern European Languages
- Arabic Studies
- Hebrew Studies
- Persian Studies
- Turkish Studies
- Middle Eastern Languages

3 year BA (Honours) in:

- Arabic and Islamic Studies
- Modern Middle Eastern History
- Hebrew and Jewish Studies
- Persian and Islamic Studies
- Turkish and Islamic Studies

Postgraduate

There are 8 MA programmes: Pre-Islamic Middle Eastern Studies; Hebrew Studies; Islamic Studies; Middle Eastern History; Persian Studies; Turkish Studies; and Middle Eastern Studies.

PhD and MPhil degrees are also available.

5. Student Numbers

There are approximately 130 students in the department, of whom 100 are undergraduates. Undergraduate numbers have been rising for the past five to six years and they admit over 40 students each year.

6. Student Profile

Nearly all the undergraduates are home students, although a few are from Europe. At postgraduate level, the MA students are predominantly home while the PhD students are mainly from overseas (from the Middle East, Europe, Japan, Malaysia). They have a local recruitment base, especially from the local Muslim and Jewish communities. There are

quite a lot of students from the south of the country; approximately 50 per cent are local. In terms of gender, there are more women than men. However, they attract more male students than the average arts subject. Regarding social class, the whole spectrum is represented, although there is less of a predominance of public school educated than, for example, Durham or St Andrews. They tend to be more representative of reality in terms of state school representation.

البروفيسور الدكتور
عبد الفتاح محمد العويسي المقدسي

Manchester Metropolitan University

1. Name of Centre/Department

- The Department of Politics and Philosophy

2. Address

Manchester Metropolitan University
All Saints Building
All Saints
Manchester
M15 6BH

www.mmu.ac.uk

3. Date of Establishment and Background of Department

A Certificate of Higher Education (CertHE) and a Diploma of Higher Education (DipHE) are offered in Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies within the Department of Politics and Philosophy. Both programmes are part-time, one evening per week over two years and aimed at 'professional and lay people'.

4. Programmes Offered (UG and PG) or the Programmes to which their Courses Contribute

Undergraduate:

- CertHE and DipHE in Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies

Postgraduate:

None

البروفيسور الدكتور
عبد الفتاح محمد العويسي المقدسي

South West England

البروفيسور الدكتور
عبد الفتاح محمد العويسي المقدسي

The University of Bristol

1. Name of Centre/Department

- The Department of Theology and Religious Studies

2. Address

University of Bristol
Senate House
Tyndall Avenue
Bristol
BS8 1TH

www.bris.ac.uk

3. Date of Establishment and Background of Department

Islamic Studies has been taught at Bristol in the Department of Theology and Religious Studies. However, in 2006, there is currently no academic member of staff appointed with a research specialism in the field of Islamic Studies.

4. Programmes Offered (UG and PG) or the Programmes to which their Courses Contribute

Undergraduate:

- BA in Theology and Religious Studies (Single Honours)
- BA in Theology and Politics
- BA in Theology and Sociology
- BA in Philosophy and Theology

Modules including Islam are:

- Judaism and Islam (year 1, mandatory for Single Honours)
- Introduction to Arabic (year 1)
- Classical Islamic Thought (year 2)
- Islamic Texts in Arabic (year 2)
- Religion and Ritual in Islam (year 2)
- Modern Religious Movements in Iran (year 3)
- Islamic Law (year 3)

Postgraduate:

None

5. Student Numbers

'Islam' a Level 1 course for Single Honours Theology and Religious Studies attracted up to 50 students each year. At Level 2, 5 specialised Islamic Studies courses were available: 'Classical Islamic Thought'; 'Islamic Texts in Arabic I and II'; 'Introduction to Islamic Mysticisms'; and 'Religion and Ritual in Islam'. At Level 3 there were 3 options: 'Islamic Law', 'Shi'ism', and 'Modern Religious Movements in Iran'. These Level 2-3 options attracted around 20-25 students.
(Figures correct in 2004)

6. Student Profile

Islamic Studies students at Bristol were 'overwhelmingly' female, white and middle class, mostly Christian or no religious affiliation, many from the south east of England. There were also postgraduate Muslim students from Iran and Pakistan.
(Correct in 2004)

The University of Exeter

1. Name of Centre/Department

- The Institute of Arab and Islamic Studies
- The Department of Politics

2. Address

The University of Exeter
The Queen's Drive
Exeter
Devon
EX4 4QJ

www.exeter.ac.uk

3. Date of Establishment and Background of Department

The Institute of Arab and Islamic Studies is a large multi-disciplinary area studies unit with a history within the University that goes back to the early 1970s when Arabic and Islamic studies were first introduced in Exeter. It specialises in the study of the languages, cultures, history, politics, societies, and economies of the Middle East, with a strong focus on the study of Islam and the Arab World.

In addition, the University of Exeter Politics Department also offers an MA in International Relations of the Middle East and an MA in Middle East Politics.

4. Programmes Offered (UG and PG) or the Programmes to which their Courses Contribute

The Institute of Arab and Islamic Studies

Undergraduate (Honours):
BA in:

- Arabic
- Arabic and Islamic Studies
- Arabic and Middle East Studies
- French and Arabic
- German and Arabic
- Italian and Arabic
- Russian and Arabic
- Spanish and Arabic
- Islamic Studies
- Middle East Studies
- Middle East Studies with Arabic

Postgraduate:
MA in:

- Applied Translation Studies in Middle Eastern Lang (Arabic)
- Gender and Identity in the Middle East
- Gulf Studies
- Islamic Studies
- Mediterranean Studies
- Middle East Policy Studies
- Middle East Studies

- PhD or MPhil by research

The Department of Politics

Undergraduate:

- BA in International Relations (including the module 'International Relations: War and Peace in the Middle East')

Postgraduate:

- MA in International Relations of the Middle East
- MA in Middle East Politics

5. Student Numbers

Total student numbers in the Institute are 80-90 at undergraduate level and approximately 70 at postgraduate level

6. Student Profile

Approximately 95 per cent of undergraduates are from the UK and roughly 40 per cent of postgraduates are defined as 'home' (including Europe). The home students come from all over Europe and all over the UK. Otherwise there are around 30 per cent from the Arab world, 30 per cent from China, Japan, North America and West Africa. There are a few local students. 55 per cent at undergraduate level are female and 55 per cent at postgraduate level are male. Regarding ethnicity, 30 per cent of the overseas students are Arab and, out of the home students, approximately 30 per cent are from ethnic minority backgrounds. In terms of social class, the highest proportion are from the bottom category. They do not keep figures for religion.

7. Comments by Professor Tim Niblock

As far as their core constituency is concerned, Tim Niblock said, they have a number of cores. One of these is students from schools who have done the International Baccalaureate (for example, ex-pat students). Domestically, they target inner city areas with a high proportion of ethnic minorities; they have many British Muslim students. To attract students, they hold events at inner city, ethnic minority-dominated schools. Whenever they get prospective students to visit the university, they tend to like the environment (the campus, the building and the facilities -- for example, the language lab, computer room, documentation facilities). Also, postgraduates have their own wing in the building. For undergraduates, they give a lot of attention to the contents of their degree programmes; there are seven different kinds of programme.

The University receives a lot of applications in Islamic Studies. At undergraduate level, there are no more problems than elsewhere; at the postgraduate level, if there is no funding, students do not come. There are too few British students and this is a problem of funding (it applies to the Arab world as a whole).

He said they have more students now; some courses have gone up in numbers and others have not, but it is not just because of 11 September. For example, some students who take French and German at A level want to do another language (Arabic).

The University of Gloucestershire

1. Name of Centre/Department

- The Department of Humanities

2. Address

University of Gloucestershire
The Park
Cheltenham
GL50 2RH

www.glos.ac.uk

3. Date of Establishment and Background of Department

Provision of teaching on Islam here is slight but in flux, taught recently by a non-specialist. Web information (1/10/04) states that the 'last cohort' of Theology and Religious Studies students began studies in September 2003. There were then three BA modules available on Islam: one each at first and second level (both called 'Islam'), and 'Islam and Christianity' (third level), with a strong interfaith/dialogical emphasis. Currently, the only programme offered including Islamic Studies is the BA in Religion, Philosophy and Ethics. There is currently no full-time specialist in Islamic Studies.

4. Programmes Offered (UG and PG) or the Programmes to which their Courses Contribute

Undergraduate:

- BA in Religion, Philosophy and Ethics (single or joint honours available)

Includes the module:

- Islam (level 1)

Postgraduate:

Postgraduate research degrees are available in Theology and Religious Studies. However, there is no supervision available for Islamic Studies topics.

البروفيسور الدكتور
عبد الفتاح محمد العويسي القدسي

South East England

البروفيسور الدكتور
عبد الفتاح محمد العويسي المقدسي

Birkbeck, University of London

1. Name of Centre/Department

- The Faculty of Continuing Education

2. Address

Birkbeck, University of London
Malet Street
Bloomsbury
London
WC1E 7HX

www.bbk.ac.uk

3. Date of Establishment and Background of Department

Historically, Birkbeck College has a special remit within the University of London: to provide educational opportunities for the greater London area, in particular to serve part-time and mature students with full-time jobs. Birkbeck's programme in Islamic Studies must be understood in this light, and is delivered mostly in an evening teaching format in one session per week. The net effect is that it caters for a more mature, locally based and ethnically diverse student body than is the norm for Islamic Studies in the UK generally.

Teaching staff are largely part-time and comprise associate lecturers at Birkbeck plus tutors from a range of local (faith-based) partner institutions, which also feature as providers for the sister Religious Studies programme. These include the Ebrahim Community College in London E1, the Muslim College in Ealing and the School of Oriental and Religious Studies in Woking. Staff, therefore, include both Muslims and Non-Muslims.

Islamic Studies as part-time is offered in the Faculty of Continuing Education at Birkbeck alongside, and in interaction with, a Religious Studies programme. The Faculty also offers a programme of short courses and weekend events, and hosts an interdisciplinary research Centre for the Study of Religion, Ideas and Society

4. Programmes Offered (UG and PG) or the Programmes to which their Courses Contribute

Pre-degree certificates, diplomas and short courses:

- Certificate/ Diploma in Islamic Studies
- Certificate/Diploma in Religious Studies (featuring the modules: 'Studies of the Qur'an and the Hadith' and 'Introduction to Literary Arabic')

Undergraduate:

None

Postgraduate:

- MA/Postgraduate Diploma in Islamic Studies
- Postgraduate Certificate in Islamic Studies
- PhD/MPhil degrees are also available

5. Student Numbers

The 2003-4 session had 112 students on its various Islamic Studies programmes. This breaks down to 33 MA students, around 70 Certificate/Diploma students, 5 Postgraduate Certificate students, and 2 PhD students.

6. Student Profile

Almost all (98 per cent) students are British and all are London-based (following Birkbeck's remit). Gender balance is 70 per cent male and 30 per cent female. Students' ethnicity, social class and religious affiliations are varied (mostly British-Pakistani, British-Bangladeshi, British-white, or other: German, Iraqi, Algerian, Egyptian). Most students are Muslim, Christian or Agnostic. Age range of MA students tends to be between 30 and 40 years, but it is wider for the Certificate/Diploma.

The University of Birmingham

1. Name of Centre/Department

The Department of Theology and Religion (incorporating the Centre for the Study of Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations)

2. Address

University of Birmingham
Edgbaston
Birmingham
B15 2TT

www.bham.ac.uk

3. Date of Establishment and Background of Department

Islamic Studies has been taught at Birmingham since the 1930s. The Centre for the Study of Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations (CSIC) was founded in 1976 as a joint Muslim-Christian graduate teaching and research institute and, in 1991, an undergraduate programme was started at the then Westhill College. In 1998 and 2001 respectively, both these units became part of the University of Birmingham in the Department of Theology and Religion. The CSIC is now an integrated part of the Department of Theology and Religion but is currently operating without an appointed director.

4. Programmes Offered (UG and PG) or the Programmes to which their Courses Contribute

Undergraduate:
(Within the Department of Theology and Religion)

- BA in Islamic Studies
- BA in Theology (*includes the modules*: 'Introduction to Islam' in first year and 'Islam' in second or third year)

Postgraduate:
(Within the Centre for the Study of Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations)

- MA in Islamic Studies
- Postgraduate Diploma in Islamic Studies

Supervision for MPhil and PhD degrees in most aspects of Islamic Studies is available, including Qur'an and Hadith; theology, law and philosophy; Islamic history and institutions, and contemporary religious and political thought.

5. Student Numbers

There were approximately 60 students registered in Islamic Studies programmes in 2004, some as part of formal agreements with universities in the Arab world and South East Asia. Islamic Studies is 20 per cent at postgraduate level (staff and students) and 50 per cent at undergraduate level.

6. Student Profile

At undergraduate level, the Centre attracts members of the local and regional Muslim community particularly local Muslim women. The overwhelming majority of postgraduate students are from overseas and the largest single category is overseas Muslims. Some years ago, they used to receive a bursary from Kuwait for five British Muslim students plus five other students, but this was terminated without explanation three years ago.

Although they have tried to improve the local recruitment base, the main problem is financial as there is no funding for postgraduate students. There are not many non-religious students. There is nobody in the Centre without religious affiliation, but they would welcome more. The Centre is recommended by former students, often because they feel that their religion is taken seriously, whereas in other departments, pious Muslims may feel marginalized.

Most of the students are Muslim (the ratio is approximately two to one). It used to be the other way round as it is a Muslim-Christian centre (it attracted Christian ministers and

theology students). There has been a drop in Christians because the churches are no longer able to fund students, and this is regarded as regrettable. The advisory board includes representatives from religious bodies and they are keen to sponsor more Christian students.

البروفيسور الدكتور
عبد الفتاح محمد العويسي المقدسي

The University of Cambridge

1. Name of Centre/Department

- The Faculty of Oriental Studies
- The Centre of Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies
- The Faculty of Divinity

2. Address

Cambridge Admissions Office
Fitzwilliam House
32 Trumpington Street
Cambridge
CB2 1QY

www.cam.ac.uk

3. Date of Establishment and Background of Department

In the Faculty of Oriental Studies, the focus of teaching is on knowledge of the languages, history, literature and cultures of the Middle East.
The Centre of Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies (CMEIS) was founded in 1960 in order to foster an interest in the Middle East, particularly the modern Middle East. The Centre is not a teaching institution but it works closely with the Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies section in the Faculty of Oriental Studies.
Teaching on Islam also takes place in the Faculty of Divinity as part of the undergraduate degree in Theology and Religious Studies.

4. Programmes Offered (UG and PG) or the Programmes to which their Courses Contribute

Undergraduate

Faculty of Oriental Studies

- BA in Oriental Studies (single or combined)

Specialising in one of these options:

- Ancient Near East: Assyriology
- Ancient Near East: Egyptology
- Early Civilisations of the Aegean and Near East
- Hebrew Studies
- Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies

Arabic language is also available

Faculty of Divinity

- BA in Theology and Religious Studies

Includes the modules:

- Qur'anic Arabic
- Introduction to Islam
- Islam II

Postgraduate

Faculty of Oriental Studies

- MPhil (Taught) in Oriental Studies

Students specialise in one of these subject areas:

- Assyriology
- Egyptology
- Hebrew Studies
- Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies

- PhD in Oriental Studies (by research)

The general subject areas for doctoral supervision are: Aramaic and Syriac studies; Assyriology; Egyptology; and Islamic studies.

Faculty of Divinity

- PGCert/PGDip in Theology and Religious Studies

Students can take the following courses:

- Qur'anic Arabic
- Introduction to Islam
- Islam II

- PhD/MPhil degrees are also available

البروفيسور الدكتور
عبد الفتاح محمد العويسي المقدسي

King's College, London

1. Name of Centre/Department

- The Department of Theology and Religious Studies

2. Address

King's College London
Strand
London
WC2R 2LS

www.kcl.ac.uk

3. Date of Establishment and Background of Department

The Department of Theology and Religious Studies was established in 1846 and is therefore one of the oldest in the country. Islam is taught in the Department of Theology and Religious Studies by two main scholars.

4. Programmes Offered (UG and PG) or the Programmes to which their Courses Contribute

Undergraduate:

- BA in Religious Studies

Postgraduate:

- MA in Religion in Contemporary Society

Includes the following modules:

- World Religions and Modernity (including Islam)
- Religion and Politics in Contemporary Muslim Societies
- Sufism and Modern Society
- Gender Issues in the Anthropology of Religion (including Islam)

- PhD and MPhil degrees also available, especially in the History of Islam

5. Student Numbers

Not available

6. Student Profile

The student base is very mixed, internationally and ethically diverse, with an especially high proportion of Asian students; a good proportion of students are from greater London and hence 'local'. This profile was not distinctive to Islamic Studies but illustrative of King's as a whole.

7. Comments by Professor Madawi Al-Rasheed

Madawi Al-Rasheed said that courses on Islam were always 'very popular' at King's. There has been a long history of the study of Islam at King's, with diverse strands and mixed methodologies, including Anthropology, History and Textual Studies. There is no standard 'line'.

The University of Nottingham

1. Name of Centre/Department

- The Department of Theology and Religious Studies
- The Institute for Middle Eastern Studies

2. Address

University of Nottingham
University Park
Nottingham
NG7 2RD

www.nottingham.ac.uk

3. Date of Establishment and Background of Department

Islam has been taught within the Single Honours Theology degree in the Department of Theology at Nottingham University since 1984. On the evidence of the 2003-2004 curriculum, the modules on Islam sit within a wider programme oriented to Christian theological studies, although more recently, Islam has been connected to increasing interest in the university in the interdisciplinary study of the Middle East.

The Institute for Middle Eastern Studies, launched at the University of Nottingham in November 2005, is an interdisciplinary centre based within the School of Humanities providing a focus for staff and students across a broad range of disciplines. There are a number of courses taught in various departments in the field across the University but there is no single programme of study.

4. Programmes Offered (UG and PG) or the Programmes to which their Courses Contribute

Undergraduate:

Department of Theology

- BA in Theology (single honours)

  Includes the courses: 'The Islamic Tradition', 'Christian-Muslim Relations: Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow' and 'Classical Islamic Thought'.

Other modules taught in the University:

Level 1

- Understanding the Middle East: Contemporary Challenges and Historical Background (interdisciplinary)
- Islamic Iberia (Hispanic Studies)

Level 2

- From Fashoda to Suez: British Foreign Policy 1898-1956 (History)
- The International History of the Middle East, 1918-1982 (History)
- The Crusades (History)
- From Village to Empire: An Introduction to the Archaeology of the Ancient Near East (Archaeology)

Level 3

- Suez and the End of Empire (History)
- Intermediaries in the Arab-Israeli Conflict, 1948-2000 (Politics)
- North African Fiction (French)
- The Archaeology of the Persian Gulf from the Neolithic to the 1st Millennium AD (Archaeology)
- Transitions to Agriculture in the Near East and Europe (Archaeology)

Postgraduate:

School of History

- MA (by Research) in Islamic and Middle Eastern History

  Includes the modules: 'Christians and Muslims in the Medieval Mediterranean' and 'Crisis Diplomacy in the Middle East'

Department of Theology and Religious Studies

- MA in Religious Conflict

  Includes the Modules: 'Islamic Thought', 'Religion, Identity and Conflict in the Middle East' and 'Christian-Muslim Relations'

School of Politics and International Relations

The module 'Intermediaries in the Arab Israeli Conflict, 1948-2000' can be taken as part of any MA course in the School of Politics and International Relations

5. Student Numbers

In 2004, the module 'the Islamic Tradition' had 80 students; 'Christianity and Islam' had 45 students; 'Classical Islamic Thought; had 6 students; 'Modern Islamic Thought' had 6 students; 'Islamic Thought' had 6 students; 'Christian-Muslim Relations' had 10 students; and 'Religion, Identity and Conflict in the Middle East' had 14 students
(All figures correct for 2003-2004)

6. Student Profile

Students are of 'very mixed' ethnicity, social class and religious affiliation. Home students come from England and Wales, with a small base of local recruitment due to recent fee changes. International students, mostly at MA level, come from European countries, USA and Australasia; and from Muslim countries like Lebanon, Iran and Malaysia. Gender balance is around 50/50, with a slight female predominance at undergraduate level and a slight male predominance at postgraduate level.

البروفيسور الدكتور
عبد الفتاح محمد العويسي المقدسي

The Open University

1. Name of Centre/Department

- The Department of Religious Studies

2. Address

The Open University
PO Box 197
Milton Keynes
MK7 6BJ

www.open.ac.uk

3. Date of Establishment and Background of Department

The Open University's courses are based on a descriptive, non-confessional, broadly phenomenological approach to religions. Following the University's unique structure, they are researched and written by full-time staff members (with contributions by outside academics, as appropriate) and delivered to students in the Open University's regions around the UK by a large workforce of part-time associate lecturers.

This makes the Open University the largest provider of HEI Religious Studies courses in the UK (and therefore the largest provider of material on Islam at undergraduate level). However, only one member of staff in the Department has research interests in Islamic Studies.

4. Programmes Offered (UG and PG) or the Programmes to which their Courses Contribute

Undergraduate:

- BA (Honours) Humanities
- BA (Honours) Humanities with Religious Studies

Diploma in Religious Studies (based on 2 x full Religious Studies courses in each of levels 2 and 3, and aimed at working professionals in education and healthcare)

Islam is taught in the following modules:

- 'Introducing Religions' (level 2)
- 'Religion Today: Tradition, Modernity and Change' (level 3)
- 'Religion in History: Conflict, Conversion and Co-Existence' (level 3).

5. Student Numbers

Around 1350 students take one full Religious Studies module p.a. in the UK, with the two broad courses on contemporary religions -- 'Introducing Religions' and 'Religion Today' -- averaging around 600 and around 400 students per year respectively.

6. Student Profile

The core market for the OU is mature adult learners, and there is some evidence that RS courses are a popular pathway through the general BA (Honours) Humanities degree. The department is keen to attract students with a 'secular' professional interest in religion -- e.g. teaching, police, caring professions.

The University of Oxford

1. Name of Centre/Department

- Near and Middle Eastern Studies (within the Faculty of Oriental Studies)
- The Middle East Centre (St Antony's College)
- The Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies

2. Address

University Offices
Wellington Square
Oxford
OX1 2JD

www.ox.ac.uk

3. Date of Establishment and Background of Department

The Oriental Institute, opened in 1961, is the centre where most teaching is done, acting as a focus for a number of University staff with specialisms in the areas of modern and classical Arabic literature; North Africa; Ottoman history; the modern Middle East; and Hebrew and Jewish Studies.

The Middle East Centre at St Antony's College is the centre for the interdisciplinary study of the modern Middle East in the University of Oxford. Centre Fellows teach and conduct research in the humanities and social sciences with direct reference to the Arab world, Iran, Israel and Turkey, with particular emphasis on the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The Centre was founded in 1957. The directorship was assumed the following year by the modern historian Albert Hourani, who was to play a dominant role in establishing Middle Eastern studies in Oxford.

The Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies was established in 1985 to encourage the scholarly study of Islam and the Muslim world. It contributes teaching across various Oxford faculties, including Modern History, Anthropology, Theology, Oriental Studies and Continuing Education. It undertakes various 'sponsored research' projects, 'either directly or in collaboration with interested institutions and research foundations', and hosts visiting Fellowships and Scholarships. The centre does not offer any undergraduate or postgraduate programmes.

4. Programmes Offered (UG and PG) or the Programmes to which their Courses Contribute

Undergraduate

- BA in Oriental Studies

Specialising in one of these options:

- The Ancient Near East
- Arabic
- Armenian
- Classics
- Coptic
- Egyptology
- Hebrew
- Islamic Art and Archaeology
- Old Iranian
- Persian
- Turkish

- BA in Egyptology and Ancient Near Eastern Studies
- BA in European and Middle Eastern Languages

Postgraduate

- MSt (Master of Studies) in:
  - Islamic Art and Archaeology
  - Islamic Art and Archaeology (Research Methods and Techniques)

- Modern Middle Eastern Studies
- Oriental Studies

- MPhil (Master of Philosophy) in:
  - Medieval Arabic Thought
  - Modern Middle Eastern Studies
  - Islamic Art and Archaeology
  - Ottoman Turkish Studies
  - Classical and Medieval Islamic History

- MLitt and DPhil degrees also available

5. Student Numbers

St Antony's has 25 doctoral students. The Faculty of Oriental Studies has 150 undergraduates preparing for the BA in Oriental Studies and about 170 graduate students working towards higher degrees. The BA Arabic course, which is four years in length and usually includes a period of study in the Middle East, admits about 12 students each year.

6. Student Profile

In the Middle East Centre, St Antony's, there is a balance between those from the UK and those from overseas; for example, out of those who finished in 2004; two out of six were from the UK and the other four from the US. In their other postgraduate programmes, there are one Jordanian Canadian, one Syrian, one Tunisian and one German. In the one-year Masters, out of 14 students, there are British, American, European, some Anglo-Arab, South Asian, British and Pakistani. Out of a total of 25 doctoral students, there are individuals from Israel, Britain, UAE, Greece, Turkey, Germany, Denmark, Czechoslovakia, US/Palestinian, US/Iraqi, Italy, Lebanon, Netherlands and Chechnya.

7. Comments by Dr Eugene Rogan

According to Eugene Rogan, Director of the Middle East Centre, St Antony's is a graduate college of Oxford University and the Middle East Centre is part of St Antony's; it is not university funded. It is a centre for the study of the modern Middle East and has its own endowment. The Masters programme is designed to transit into Middle Eastern studies. Students can study the languages and, after two years, they will have achieved newspaper level. There is also an option in advanced Arabic. The second Masters expects a student to have a Middle Eastern language.

They admit one out of every six or seven applicants. Numbers have increased, he said, since 9/11. There is interest in the Arab-Israeli conflict and in Islam, and now in Islam and violence/terror/*jihad*. They do not teach gender and regard this as a gap.

Oxford Brookes University

1. Name of Centre/Department

- The Wesley Centre, Oxford (within the Westminster Institute of Education)

2. Address

Oxford Brookes University
Headington Campus
Gipsy Lane
Oxford
OX3 0BP

www.brookes.ac.uk

3. Date of Establishment and Background of Department

According to the University's website 'the Wesley Centre Oxford (WCO) began life in 1991 as the Wesley and Methodist Studies Centre (WMSC), a research centre within Westminster College. In April 2000, Westminster College became part of Oxford Brookes University as the Westminster Institute of Education. In January 2003 WMSC became the Wesley Centre Oxford, expanding its remit to include the management of the Institute's distance learning theology and religion programmes. WCO has no religious affiliation although it does work closely with the Methodist Church maintaining links from Westminster College, which was a Methodist foundation'. Although Islamic Studies modules are included in their distance learning undergraduate programme, the WCO currently has no full-time specialist in Islamic Studies.

4. Programmes Offered (UG and PG) or the Programmes to which their Courses Contribute

Undergraduate

- BA (Hons.) in Theology and Religion (by distance learning)

Includes the modules:

- Study of Religions: Islam, Hinduism
- Islam and the West

Postgraduate

None

The School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London

1. Name of Centre/Department

- The Department of the Study of Religions (The Faculty of Arts and Humanities)
- The Department of the Languages and Cultures of the Near and Middle East (The Faculty of Languages and Cultures)
- The Centre of Islamic Studies
- The London Middle East Institute
- The Centre of Islamic and Middle Eastern Law

2. Address

School of Oriental and African Studies,
University of London
Thornhaugh Street
Russell Square
London
WC1H 0XG

www.soas.ac.uk

3. Date of Establishment and Background of Department

SOAS, founded in 1917, is structured academically into three faculties: Arts and Humanities; Languages and Cultures; and Law and Social Sciences. The teaching of Islamic Studies, Middle Eastern Studies and Arabic is spread across all three faculties. There are also two research centres (the Centre of Islamic Studies, the London Middle East Institute and the Centre of Islamic and Middle Eastern Law).

The Centre of Islamic Studies was set up in 1995. The Centre offers an MA Islamic Studies programme and is strongly philological and language-based. Its 'core activities' are described as the study of the Qur'an and Hadith in Arabic and 'the analysis and translation of Islamic texts from Arabic into English'

The Centre of Islamic and Middle Eastern Law was established in 1990 in recognition of 'the growing importance of law in both its Islamic and Middle Eastern dimensions'.

The London Middle East Institute was founded at SOAS in 2002.The Institute draws upon the resources of London and SOAS to provide teaching, training, research, publication, consultancy, outreach and other services related to the Middle East.

The study of religions *per se* began only in the 1980s, when 'it became possible to read for a BA with religions as a special field of enquiry'. However, Professor Gifford, Head of the Department of the Study of Religions, commented that 'very little' of the questionnaire actually applied to the Study of Religions Department, since Islam had, historically, always been taught at SOAS from the Department of Near and Middle Eastern Studies: 'there is enormous involvement in Islam, but we [i.e., Study of Religions] don't handle any of it'.

4. Programmes Offered (UG and PG) or the Programmes to which their Courses Contribute

Undergraduate
The Department of the Languages and Cultures of the Near and Middle East:

Single Degrees:

- BA Ancient Near Eastern Studies
- BA Arabic
- BA Arabic and Islamic Studies
- BA Arabic Cultural Studies
- BA Hebrew and Israeli Studies
- BA Middle Eastern Studies
- BA Persian
- BA Turkish

Combined Degrees

- BA Arabic (and another subject)
- BA Hebrew (and another subject)
- BA Middle Eastern Studies (and another subject)
- BA Persian (and another subject)
- BA Turkish (and another subject)
- BA with Georgian (minor)

The Department provides teaching for programmes of study leading to Certificates in Arabic/Arabic Studies, Modern Hebrew, Persian, Turkish, and Ancient Near Eastern Studies. These are normally one-year, full-time courses corresponding to the first year of the appropriate BA course. Some can be taken part-time over two years or three.

The Department of the Study of Religions:

- BA in Study of Religions (*including the module* 'Introduction to Islam')

Postgraduate

The Department of the Languages and Cultures of the Near and Middle East:

- MA Ancient Near Eastern Languages
- MA Arabic Literature
- MA Islamic Societies and Cultures
- MA Islamic Studies
- MA Israeli Studies
- MA Near and Middle Eastern Studies
- MA Turkish Studies

The Department of the Study of Religions:

- MA in Study of Religions
  (*Including the modules:* 'The Origins and Early Development of Islam in the Middle East: Problems and Perspectives', 'Modern Trends in Islam', 'Islam in South Asia')

The Centre of Islamic Studies:

- MA in Islamic Studies

5. Student Numbers

Not available

6. Student Profile

Not available

7. Comments by Professor Robert Springborg

According to Robert Springborg, Director of the London Middle East Centre, the Institute conducts a broad range of public programmes tailored to specific audiences or specialized briefings and lunches (for business people, government representatives etc). It offers a range of services for clients (from the public and private sector), for example teaching, training, consultancies (such as the training of multi-national corporation personnel going to the Middle East, consultancies for DFID, FCO, USAID etc). These activities, he explained, fall outside the usual definition of a Middle East centre.

Muslim Institutions

البروفيسور الدكتور
عبد الفتاح محمد العويسي المقدسي

The Muslim College

1. Name of Centre/Department

- The Muslim College

2. Address

The Muslim College
20-22 Creffield Road
Ealing Common
London
W5 3RP

www.muslimcollege.ac.uk

3. Date of Establishment and Background of Department

The Muslim College began functioning as an educational institution of graduate studies in 1988. The Muslim College describes itself as 'a religious academic institution' and 'a committed Muslim institution [...] faithful to the message of Islam'. The Muslim College is therefore an explicitly Muslim institution.

The Muslim College offers an independent MA in Islamic Studies, based around a traditional Islamic Sciences syllabus of Qur'an and Hadith studies, fiqh and usul-al-fiqh, including some Arabic teaching. The MA is available to students who hold an undergraduate degree in any subject. A key attraction is that the MA is free, although students must find their own accommodation and living expenses. From 1992-3 the Muslim College began to offer Certificates in Islamic Studies and Arabic language in association with Birkbeck College, University of London; currently, it offers around six such courses taught at the Muslim College. The College also offers PhD programmes in conjunction with Al-Azhar University (Egypt) which are also fee-free.

As Professor Zaki Badawi, the Principal of the Muslim College, was the key player behind the establishment and development of the Muslim College, his death on 24 January 2006 leaves the future of the College uncertain.

4. Programmes Offered (UG and PG) or the Programmes to which their Courses Contribute

Undergraduate
None

Postgraduate

- MA in Islamic Studies
- Certificate and Diploma in Islamic Studies (in collaboration with Birkbeck College, University of London)

All of these courses include Arabic language

Professional Training
The Muslim College also offers professional training courses in the areas of:

- Imam Training
- Education
- Media Studies

5. Student Numbers

Intake averages around 25 students per year, although there is a variable drop-out rate.

6. Student Profile

Within the UK, the College has a very strong London recruitment base, in part because it can offer no accommodation for students who move from elsewhere in the UK; it also has a strong international base, especially from Africa, but also Saudi Arabia and Indonesia. Gender and ethnicity of students is mixed; there is no segregation of women and men (average ratio 50::50) or of Sunni and Shi'a. However, the College 'can't cater for non-Muslims'.

7. Comments by Professor Ali Hamid

The College includes a course on 'World Religions', featuring African Tribal Religions, Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism and Christianity. The different religions are taught by practitioners. Professor Ali Hamid considers this an appropriate method, since -- to use the example of Islam -- non-Muslims teaching Islam in the UK may give at best a 'dry', at worst a 'hostile', exposition; teachers who are also Muslims, however, can 'correct wrong information'.

البروفيسور الدكتور
عبد الفتاح محمد العويسي المقدسي

The Institute of Ismaili Studies

1. Name of Centre/Department

- The Institute of Ismaili Studies

2. Address

The Institute of Ismaili Studies
42-44 Grosvenor Gardens
London,
SW1W 0EB

www.iis.ac.uk

3. Date of Establishment and Background of Department

The Institute of Ismaili Studies was established in 1977 with a particular focus on Shi'ism and Ismailism. The Institute is a UK branch of the Aga Khan University, its patron being the Ismaili Imam, the Aga Khan.

4. Programmes Offered (UG and PG) or the Programmes to which their Courses Contribute

Undergraduate

None

Postgraduate

- Graduate Programme in Islamic Studies and Humanities:

The Institute offers a Graduate Programme in Islamic Studies and Humanities. The course normally lasts three years and students are required to spend one of these years registered for a full-time programme at a British university. Completion of the course results in students obtaining a Masters degree from the latter.

عبد الفتاح محمد العويسي المقدسي

The Aga Khan University

1. Name of Centre/Department

- The Institute for the Study of Muslim Civilisations

2. Address

Aga Khan University Institute for the Study of Muslim Civilisations
3 Bedford Square
London
WC1B 3RA

www.aku.edu/ismc

3. Date of Establishment and Background of Department

Aga Khan University, which was established in 1988 as a private, international university, is a self-governing institution currently operating in seven countries. The University is part of Aga Khan Development Network.
In 2002, AKU established its Institute for the Study of Muslim Civilisations (AKU-ISMC) in the United Kingdom. It offers a postgraduate taught programme in 'Muslim Cultures'.

4. Programmes Offered (UG and PG) or the Programmes to which their Courses Contribute

- MA in Muslim Cultures
- Certificate Course for Educators: *A Window into the Histories and Cultures of Muslims*

البروفيسور الدكتور
عبد الفتاح محمد العويسي المقدسي

International Colleges of Islamic Sciences

1. Name of Centre/Department

- International Colleges of Islamic Sciences (merged with the International Technological University)

2. Address

International Colleges of Islamic Sciences
115 Dollis Hill Lane
London
NW2 6HS
UK

www.kolieh.com

3. Date of Establishment and Background of Department

The International Colleges of Islamic Science (ICIS) was established in 1989 to provide Islamic knowledge. According to their website, the aim of ICIS is to 'uplift the standard of Islamic teachings and provide affordable high quality courses to people all over the world'. Educational resources are based on 'the divine teachings of Islam through the holy Qur'an, the prophet Mohammad and his infallible progeny'.
The first college of ICIS was established in London and other branches are operational in different levels in the following countries: Bahrain, Denmark, Kenya, Morocco, Syria, UAE and the USA.

4. Programmes Offered (UG and PG) or the Programmes to which their Courses Contribute

Undergraduate

- BA in Islamic Studies through distance learning (when the College was established in 1989, however, the teaching was delivered on campus)

Postgraduate

- MPhil/PhD in Islamic Studies

The Islamic College for Advanced Studies

1. Name of Centre/Department

- The Islamic College for Advanced Studies (programmes validated by Middlesex University)

2. Address

The Islamic College for Advanced Studies
133 High Road
Willesden
London
NW10 2SW

www.islamic-college.ac.uk

3. Date of Establishment and Background of Department

The Islamic College for Advanced Studies was established in 1998 and describes itself as an institution built on 'Islamic moral values' where students are able to 'develop the full potential of their academic strengths without compromising their faith and way of life'. It offers an undergraduate BA course in Islamic Studies as well as A-level courses and Postgraduate Diplomas by distance learning.

4. Programmes Offered (UG and PG) or the Programmes to which their Courses Contribute

Undergraduate

- BA (Honours) in Islamic Studies

Postgraduate

The following courses can be studied by distance learning:

- Diploma in Qur'an and Hadith Studies
- Diploma in Islamic Philosophy
- Diploma in Islamic Law
- Diploma in History and Social Studies of Islam

The European Institute of Human Sciences

1. Name of Centre/Department

- The European Institute of Human Sciences

2. Address

The European Institute of Human Sciences
Highmead Foundation
Llanybydder
Ceredigion
SA40 9UL

www.eihs.org.uk

3. Date of Establishment and Background of Department

EIHS was established in March 1998 and officially opened in November 1999. The Institute was founded in order to teach Arabic language and Islamic Studies up to degree level standard. It is a private charitable organisation. The Institute believes that it is the only UK-based College to use Arabic as the primary medium of instruction. Their aim is to produce graduates who are fluent Arabic speakers; prospective students must therefore demonstrate their proficiency in Arabic before they can enrol on the Islamic Studies degree programme. For those with little or no prior knowledge of Arabic, the Institute offers a two-year Arabic Language Diploma.

4. Programmes Offered (UG and PG) or the Programmes to which their Courses Contribute

Undergraduate

- 1Year Arabic Language Certificate
- 2 Year Arabic Language Diploma
- Short summer course in beginners Arabic
- 3 Year Islamic Studies/Shariah
- 2 Year Imam Diploma
- License for Inculcating the Holy Qur'an

Postgraduate

- MA or PhD in Islamic Studies

5. Student Numbers

The European Institute of Human Sciences currently has 80 full-time, residential students.

6. Student Profile

There are approximately 35 female students and 45 male students.

The Markfield Institute of Higher Education

1. Name of Centre/Department

- The Markfield Institute of Higher Education (programmes validated by Loughborough University)

2. Address

Markfield Institute of Higher Education
Ratby Lane
Markfield
Leicestershire
LE67 9SY

www.mihe.org.uk

3. Date of Establishment and Background of Department

The Markfield Institute of Higher Education (MIHE), Markfield, Leicestershire, started in September 2000 as an independent institution linked to the Islamic Foundation, Markfield. It teaches only at postgraduate level and its degrees are currently validated by Loughborough University.

4. Programmes Offered (UG and PG) or the Programmes to which their Courses Contribute

Postgraduate:

- PGCert/PGDip
- MA in Islamic Studies
- MA in Muslim Community Studies
- MA in Islamic Banking, Finance and Management
- PhD/MPhil programmes are available

5. Student Numbers

There are approximately 60 students on the Masters programme and around 10 students currently working on PhDs.

6. Student Profile

Students are from a variety of international backgrounds and are predominantly Muslim.

London Open College

1. Name of Centre/Department

- London Open College

2. Address

London Open College
7 Bridges Place
Parsons Green
London
SW6 4HW

www.londonoc.com

3. Date of Establishment and Background of Department

London Open College was established in 2000 as a provider of what they call 'Islamic distance learning'. It describes itself as 'independent' and as 'not funded or controlled by any government and it is not a British HE/FE University/College nor does it award British qualifications'. According to its website there is 'no residency requirement and it is not the College's function to be a residential learning centre'.
The college offers a Certificate, a Diploma and a Bachelor's degree in Islamic Studies. All degrees are offered both in Arabic and English.

4. Programmes Offered (UG and PG) or the Programmes to which their Courses Contribute

Undergraduate

- Foundation programmes in Islamic Studies: (under preparation)
- Certificate of Higher Education in Islamic Studies
- Diploma of Higher Education in Islamic Studies
- BA in Islamic Studies

Postgraduate

None

البروفيسور الدكتور
عبد الفتاح محمد العويسي المقدسي

Appendix 3

LIST OF INTERVIEWS

Interviews conducted by Dr Maria Holt

22 June 2004: Professor Robert Springborg, Director of the London Middle East Institute, School of Oriental and African Studies

2 July 2004: Professor Jorgen Nielsen, Professor of Islamic Studies, Department of Theology and Religion, University of Birmingham

2 July 2004: Dr Jabal Buaben, Director of the Centre for the Study of Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations, Department of Theology and Religion, University of Birmingham

16 July 2004: Dr Andrew Newman, Head of the Department of Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies, University of Edinburgh

16 July 2004: Professor Raymond Hinnebusch, Professor of International Relations, School of International Relations, University of St Andrews

26 July 2004: Dr Eugene Rogan, University Lecturer in the Modern History of the Middle East, Faculty of Oriental Studies and Fellow of St Antony's College, University of Oxford

22 September 2004: Dr Emma Murphy, Senior Lecturer, Institute for Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies, University of Durham

29 September 2004: Dr Clive Jones, Lecturer in Middle East Studies, Institute for International Studies, University of Leeds

7 October 2004: Dr Philip Sadgrove, Head of the Department of Middle Eastern Studies, University of Manchester

12 November 2004: Professor Tim Niblock, Professor of Arab Gulf Studies, the Institute of Arab and Islamic Studies, University of Exeter

Interviews conducted by Dr Steven Sutcliffe

17 May 2004: Gabriele Marranci, Lecturer in the Anthropology of Religion, Department of Divinity and Religious Studies, University of Aberdeen

31 May 2004: Mr. Phil André, previously Associate Lecturer, Department of Religious Studies, University of Newcastle (Email interview)

16 June 2004: Professor Robert Gleave, Lecturer, Department of Theology and Religious Studies, University of Bristol (now Professor of Arabic Studies, the Institute of Arab and Islamic Studies, University of Exeter)

2 July 2004: Professor David Waines, Emeritus Professor, Department of Religious Studies, Lancaster University

2 July 04: Professor Paul Gifford, Professor of African Christianity, the Department of the Study of Religions, the School of Oriental and African Studies (Email interview)

13 July 2004: Professor Kim Knott, Professor of Religious Studies, and Dr Seán McLoughlin, Senior Lecturer in Religion, Anthropology and Islam, Department of Theology and Religious Studies, University of Leeds

20 July 2004: Professor Hugh Goddard, Professor of Christian-Muslim Relations, Department of Theology and Religious Studies, University of Nottingham (Email interview)

3 August 2004: Dr Sophie Gilliat-Ray, Lecturer, School of Religious and Theological Studies, Cardiff University

26 August 2004: Dr David Herbert, Senior Lecturer and Staff Tutor, Department of Religious Studies, the Open University

30 August 04: Dr Jeremy Carrette, Head of Department of Religious Studies, University of Stirling (now Lecturer in Religious Studies in the Department of Religious Studies, University of Kent)

31 August 2004: Professor Ron Geaves, Senior Lecturer, Department of Theology and Religious Studies, University of Chester

1 October 2004: Dr Lloyd Ridgeon, Lecturer in Islamic Studies, Department of Theology and Religious Studies, University of Glasgow

12 October 2004: Dr Mahmood Chandia, Subject Leader (Islamic Studies), Department of Education and Social Science, University of Central Lancashire

14 October 2004: Dr Madawi Al-Rasheed, Professor of Social Anthropology, Department of Theology and Religious Studies, King's College London (by telephone)

23 November 2004: Dr Gwen Griffith-Dickson, Director of the Centre for the Study of Religion, Ideas and Society and Dr Barbara Zollner, Associate Lecturer in Islamic Studies, School of Continuing Education, Birkbeck, University of London

25 November 2004: Dr Ali Hamid, Lecturer, Muslim College (telephone interview)

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عبد الفتاح محمد العويسي المقدسي

Appendix 4

COMMENTS BY HEADS OF DEPARTMENT AND DEPARTMENTAL REPRESENTATIVES

Interview with Dr Andrew Newman, Head of the Department of Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies, University of Edinburgh (16/07/04)

Andrew Newman discussed the impact of September 11. In the USA, there are more jobs and more money; however, higher education is not funded in that way in Britain. In the wake of British withdrawal from the Middle East, the American government channelled money into 'critical language areas' -- targeted areas -- but this has never been the case in the UK. If one is good in the USA, there is a lot of money available (at Princeton, for example).

The teaching of Islamic Studies has changed as a result of the increasing availability of material in translation (for example, in the area of Islamic medicine) -- not everyone can speak Arabic. Also, the Qur'an is available in translation. What is sad, he said, is that, in the RAE context, translation is actively discouraged. When he started in the 1970s, it was mostly secondary sources, now it is mostly primary sources -- this is very important. In the study of Shi'ism, for example, there is an increasing amount of material in English. Now the fields are fully fledged, for example Ismailism; there has been a blossoming in certain areas. While there were no fields in the 1960s and 70s, there are now fields and sub-fields. Every possible discipline is represented; fields have exploded. It is now possible for people from different fields to cooperate.

In his department, they periodically think about the naming of the discipline but do not come up with anything new. Islam and Arabic may be the pivotal common theme but there is more to it -- something more reflective of the area as a whole. But the problem is that they are all split up (for example, Islam in India). Departments are divided up in certain ways. People are thinking more across regions that they used to 20 or 30 years ago but, in the academic arena, it is very difficult (Islam in Egypt and in India). Where, for example, does someone writing a book about Shi'ism in India situate himself?

The discipline is dominated by academic departments. Only the very large area studies centres in the US can afford to have just one person specializing in a small, specialized area (for example, Shi'ism in Pakistan).

People at the fringes find it difficult. At Edinburgh, they look for people to meet the teaching requirements but they are more relaxed about the discipline.

The British system, in Dr Newman's view, is better than the American. But there is little support and numbers fluctuate. Whereas in the US, they put in more money, this does not happen in Britain. As the BRISMES report noted, certain areas are disappearing and will take years to get back. The market is a short-term instrument.

Interview with Professor Raymond Hinnebusch, Professor of International Relations, Department of International Relations, University of St Andrews (16/07/04)

Raymond Hinnebusch said that he feels ambivalent about the idea of increasing funding in order to persuade people, as he put it, 'to do the government's bidding'. However, he believes that the government should provide scholarships to study Arabic, as it is so difficult to study. Regarding the name 'the study of Islam and Muslims', he said that it depends on how subjects are taught. The University of Durham did it well, putting Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies together; it is important that this approach is not the training of Muslim clergy -- using the methods of social science for the study of the Muslim world.

Interview with Dr Emma Murphy, Senior Lecturer, Institute for Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies, University of Durham (22/09/04)

The teaching of Middle Eastern Studies has not changed but, in Emma Murphy's opinion, it should change. It is currently lagging behind best practice as it has developed across the academic world. Middle East Studies tends to be very isolated as a field; it is not integrated into other disciplines, such as political science or religious studies. Therefore, it has been unable to retain its objectivity and has lost its perspective.

Dr Murphy was keen to stress that area studies, in general, is very weak; it lacks depth. The problem, in her opinion, is that it feels itself to be special and is therefore isolated from the mainstream of its own disciplines, especially in terms of what one *should* be doing. For example, distance delivery in the region and integrating with the business community has been abysmal.

Academics complain that the business community should give them more money but those in the business world respond that the academic

community is failing to address the issues -- instead, they only complain. The Foreign Office and the British government do not listen but is Middle East studies relevant? It has failed, unlike the rest of academia, to make itself relevant.

Islamic and Middle Eastern studies are inseparable; it is impossible to understand the Middle East without understanding Islam and vice versa.

The word 'studies', she commented, explains it all; it is a mishmash of lots of bits and pieces. One of the problems of Middle Eastern Studies in British universities (unlike the US) is that the area of Middle East Studies is so small: there are not strong Middle Eastern clusters and this has a weakening effect. There should have been consolidation, to develop collectively, in order to apply for big research funding bids. But instead the area has remained small, a collection of individuals working on their pet projects. They should think bigger and collaboratively rather than still thinking as individuals.

Islamic Studies does not know whether it is theology or Middle Eastern studies; it does not know where to put itself -- it has not decided where or what it is. Middle Eastern Studies suffers from the same problem.

In her view, students do not want to do degrees with the word 'studies' in the title; it seems wishy washy and unfocused. It says nothing to an employer and therefore it is hard to get jobs with a degree in 'Middle East Studies'. There is no discipline in Islamic Studies; a discipline requires methodology. Middle East and Islamic Studies is not a discipline and this is the problem.

Neither 'Middle East' nor 'Islamic' Studies is a useful term for attracting funding. Neither is useful at undergraduate level when students are forced to amass debts to put themselves through university.

Regarding research, Middle East Studies does not know where it is coming from; it is isolated and in a world of its own. *It is not a discipline; it is a field.* People working in it should define their own disciplines properly. They need to re-think where they are positioning themselves collectively.

There is also a generational issue. The older generation is retiring and the younger ones do not see the relevance of BRISMES. BRISMES should be doing things to support the RAE but it does not do anything. It should throw itself behind funding bids, support a consortium of several universities to put in a major funding bid, instead of everyone working as individuals. BRISMES should be looking at cutting edge developments; it

has no strategic plan. Instead, individuals are competing with each other in a petty way and this is very unconstructive. Everyone is looking to their own interests and jealousies; they have no idea of consortium work or the collective good.

Other disciplines have managed to develop so why not Middle East Studies? In Dr Murphy's opinion, it is because everyone thinks as individuals and there is no strategic thinking. This is a result of massive conservatism and resistance to change. Also, there is a feeling that somehow the Middle East is 'different', the belief that Arabic is 'different'. However, it is no longer feasible to teach in this way. The field has always been amateur, the preserve of ex-diplomats and others with an interest in the Middle East. These people are not research specialists. They come from a tradition of amateurism (like the so-called "camels" in the Foreign Office, they have all gone native and lack credibility).

Dr Murphy commented that there is a strong drive for change in the higher education sector as a whole. People have now seen what is possible and are now more critical of what their own field is doing.

BRISMES argued that the government should, for example, give support to the teaching of minority languages. But this suggestion is not market-led. The government should do more for postgraduate studies -- students who are going into the Foreign Office or public sector employees who want to do MAs.

The ESRC awards seven PhD studentships for area studies for the whole country. They need more experts. It is a generational issue; eventually there will be a chronic shortage of teachers. Therefore, they must recognize the strategic importance of Middle East studies. But how many areas of strategic importance are there? Such considerations stop Middle East Studies adapting to the real world (for example, to the British army); therefore, the courses being taught are often irrelevant.

One problem is that the RAE exercise measures people as individuals; therefore, the temptation is to look for funding to, for example, write a book. In that case, one needs to buy oneself out for a year. However, thinking strategically, some people buy themselves out for years, which means filling the gaps with temporary appointments. Instead, they should increase the resource base -- they should think collaboratively. The bigger the department, the better research and administration is possible. This is the way it works in other departments, but the Middle East feels itself to be different. It is stuck in its own little world and this is

not the way other people do it; academics in this field are making life harder for themselves.

People simply do not understand why the department is in deficit. In the old days, the surplus was taken away from successful departments and given to the 'bottomless hole' of Middle Eastern Studies. However, this has now changed and they have to become accountable.

Interview with Dr Clive Jones, Lecturer in Middle East Studies, Institute for International Studies, University of Leeds (29/09/04)

Clive Jones believes that there is a market for Middle East studies but it is difficult to persuade universities to invest in area studies in general and the Middle East in particular. At the same time, it is unrealistic to subject everything to market forces.

Dr Jones is currently the Treasurer of BRISMES. Traditionally, he said, there has been a reluctance in BRISMES to "think outside the box". He thinks they should be broadening out and trying to hook in interested students. BRISMES has written to heads of departments, asking them to pass on information to students about the Society, which is something they should have done years ago.

Teaching has changed in the sense that there is a lot more material available and this is as a result of the Internet. In his view, students do not do enough reading any more. They need to know more about history and culture. However, as most of the courses are arranged in ten-week modules, it is not their fault; two terms of teaching is no longer the case and students are victims of this; they have a wider but not a deeper knowledge. Their dissertations, however, tend to be very strong methodologically.

There is an overlap between Middle East and Islamic Studies mainly in terms of political discourse -- how Islam is being used to pursue political agendas. It is about the rise of political Islam, the politicisation of Islam and some people are uncomfortable about this. Where the interface takes place is in Religious Studies and the political process. There is a distinction between fundamentalism and radicalism.

Degrees are structured in such a way as to make studying Islam in-depth difficult (it is the same with Jewish studies) and this is not the students' fault. Unless they specialise in Islam, they will not get a grounding. But

now there is one module at MA level (without a grounding in Islam). Other departments, for example Lancaster, are the same.

International Studies, where he works, is an interdisciplinary field. The 'purity' of the Middle East, of Islamic Studies, is somehow contaminated by exposure to other disciplines -- some people believe that this is a problem for Area Studies in general. However, for example, one cannot understand the current crisis in Saudi Arabia without understanding globalisation.

Regarding the question of recruitment, they have recruited quite well for the Middle Eastern studies course. The word 'studies' in the title suggests that it is interdisciplinary. Renaming the field depends on the aims of individual programmes and how those aims are defined; it depends on which modules are being offered. They are facing a drop in undergraduate numbers and have been trying to make the degree more 'sexy'. In his view, anything that challenges misconceptions about Islam (as a code of life, political order etc) in all its richness (broader political participation) is to be encouraged.

Dr Jones noted that more people are now studying the Middle East as part of broader programmes than those who are registered on Middle East programmes; this is an issue that needs to be addressed. It is necessary to challenge the narrow view of 'Middle East Studies' (for example, Durham University's current situation). It would create as many opportunities as problems -- for example, at Durham there are now a host of students who will be exposed to Middle East Studies; some of them might get hooked.

Interview with Dr Philip Sadgrove, Head of the Department of Middle Eastern Studies, University of Manchester (07/10/04)

Philip Sadgrove commented the recruitment market is changing. In the past, Middle Eastern Studies was regarded as very much a specialist subject which did not attract large numbers of people and tended to appeal mainly to those with some link to the region. Nowadays, however, since the international scene is well known to schoolchildren through the media etc., the Middle East has become a focus of interest for young people. In the last 10-15 years, the constituency has changed radically and they are now attracting a much broader group of students. The situation is still developing.

In the last few years, there has been a growth in interest in modern Middle Eastern history. They have devised a programme which Dr

Sadgrove feels clearly meets the needs of the market. He feels that they could market themselves even more widely. September 11 and Iraq have played an important role in this respect -- they have had an impact on student numbers. The media also plays a big role. People in general want to find out more, for example, Jewish students are interested in Arabic and Islam and vice versa. There is a genuine attempt to understand each other. The University of Manchester is very much involved; it provides a forum, and this is where Manchester is unique -- it has a combination of Arabic/Islamic and Jewish/Hebrew Studies, which is healthy and of benefit.

The field of Middle Eastern Studies, in Dr Sadgrove's view, has changed significantly in terms of language teaching. There is also a trend (at many universities) towards modern Middle East Studies (to the detriment of classical studies); there needs to be a balance -- they have now gone too far in one direction.

In all their degrees, they insist on some historical component; at least an introductory historical paper and a religion paper (Judaism or Islam). Students need some background knowledge. It is not realistic to teach subjects only as languages; students need a broader social and cultural awareness. For example, they will not be able to understand modern Israel without understanding Judaism. A basic knowledge of religion and history is essential.

Therefore, they have various core courses; for example, the literature of the Middle East, religion, history and everyone must do these. This is another way in which they have changed (core courses). But they retain flexibility. A student can concentrate, for example, on Islam or could study Christianity in the Middle East in the early centuries. A British Muslim could go to Manchester to learn more about his or her religion. It is not a mosque and students appreciate the academic approach; they are able to discover new things that very often they do not know.

There is an Islamic institution in nearby Bury where imams are trained; they get a solid Islamic training and then go to Al-Azhar. However, they then return to the University of Manchester because there are other dimensions that only a university can bring. Also Jewish students who have had scholarly training attend university to do their PhDs -- this he regards as very positive. He gave the example of an orthodox Jewish family in Manchester, four of whose members are graduates of his department. But imams are also studying there. It is a very harmonious environment -- whatever people's views, they leave them at the door;

there are no conflicts and people appreciate that this would not be welcome.

They have close ties with the Religion and Theology Department. There is also a centre for Jewish studies in the University and an Institute for the Contemporary Middle East -- this provides an umbrella for interdisciplinary seminars etc.

It is not necessary to teach Islam in a department of Middle Eastern Studies -- it could be part of Religious Studies. But he thinks the emphasis is right and that Islam should be part of the Middle East Department (he gave the example of an outsider coming to Britain -- they would not be able to understand it without some knowledge of Christianity).

Islamic Studies is best represented as an interdisciplinary field (Arabic is not a dead language like Latin -- the Qur'an is in Arabic, as is a lot of basic literature). One is using language to further understand the culture and this is something they stress at Manchester. This is why they have so many students.

Regarding the term 'Middle Eastern Studies', it could be Islamic Studies or Jewish Studies -- it does not really matter; Judaism and Islam are key components -- they are pretty broad fields. But it is not only the religious texts; there is also architecture, art etc.

When asked about renaming the field, he said that the name 'Islamic Studies' does not put students off, or the term 'Jewish Studies'. It is an accurate description of what the do -- 'orientalism', 'the Near East' etc. Even using the term 'Middle East' is making a political statement but this term has become acceptable. No doubt, he commented, the naming will change in time. There are many departments called 'Middle Eastern Studies' but this may cease to be fashionable -- the name is not important; it does not offend anyone -- he would not want to use terminology that upsets people. It used to be 'Near Eastern Studies' but now this is only used in the US.

In his view, the British government does not offer enough postgraduate opportunities for specialists in the field and there is a paucity of people in Britain. They should commit scholarships or give preference to people in this field. There are not enough people in their 20s, 30s and 40s with PhDs in Middle East Studies. Now, at many universities, they have to bring in people from overseas. They need to maintain expertise in this field and, in his opinion, this is a very serious issue. Even if a student gets a first, there is still no scholarship available.

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office keeps saying that it is desperately short of expertise; therefore, it has a responsibility to offer postgraduate opportunities. Some subjects, for example Kurdish, are not adequately reflected in British universities. There are not enough experts -- even in Urdu, there are no experts on history etc -- also Berber, Pashtu -- they are underrepresented.

The question of Scholarships is a big priority for them. The Higher Education Funding Council (HEFCE) has a responsibility to maintain minority languages; at the moment, they support languages that have less than one hundred students nationally (for example, Syriac, Turkish, Aramaic) -- universities receive funding because they are not getting many students. It is essential that this is maintained. However, a review is underway at present. HEFCE does not include Kurdish. But not only should Kurdish be included, they should expand their remit to include Hebrew and Arabic, which could do with strengthening. Numbers are increasing and it is not always easy for the institutions concerned to respond. If the government wants these subjects, it must pay for them.

Interview with Professor Tim Niblock, Professor of Arab Gulf Studies, Institute of Arab and Islamic Studies, University of Exeter (12/11/04)

In Tim Niblock's opinion, the field has changed totally. It used to be a very limited field in the late 1960s but now there is a much greater amount of literature and general interest in the subject has grown.

He suggested that, in some respects, Islamic Studies is part of Middle East Studies and in some respects the other way round. Sometimes Islamic Studies can involve Theological and Religious Studies or can stretch to include Indonesia, Malaysia etc.

Islamic Studies is a discipline in the sense that Middle East Studies is not: it has a discipline behind it. There are many ways in which the phenomenon of Islam can be looked at, for example through politics or sociology.

The two terms (Islamic Studies and Middle East Studies), he said, are both useful but in different kinds of ways: the term 'Middle East Studies' for the ESRC and the term 'Islamic Studies' for the AHRC.

In response to a question about the use of the term 'the Study of Islam and Muslims', he said that it is useful for some purposes but does not cover everything he is interested in.

Interview with Professor Jorgen Nielsen, Former Director of the Graduate Institute for Theology and Religion, University of Birmingham (02/07/04)

Regarding the relationship between Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies, Jorgen Nielsen believes that the difference is geographical. After all, most of the Muslim world is not in the Middle East. Islamic Studies faculties in the Middle East find it difficult to understand Islamic Studies in Britain; the context is much broader than in the Islamic world.

The CSIC is no longer a 'department of theology' in the conventional sense; they also deny they are a 'department of religious studies'. They are participants; religions are present and here the business of participant observation becomes central (in the social anthropological sense). This, he said, is why the Department has become so interesting.

He explained that 15 years ago, Westhill College (a teacher-training college) offered a BEd in Religious Studies in order to recruit from the Muslim community into teaching; this became a BA in Religious Studies and has challenged traditional departmental theologians, thus becoming one of the University's flagships of widening participation. Many of the students have been let down by schools (for example, Asian women) so they accept students on relatively low criteria -- and accept them into mainstream programmes. These women do very well, he noted, and are fun to work with. In addition, their participation will have an impact on future generations and on how the Asian community sees itself, in terms of identity and opportunities.

Islamic Studies used to be attached to Theology and Religion (its origin lies in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries) however, after World War Two, it was liberated from Theology and absorbed into Area Studies. Islamic Studies, in his view, should develop a degree of independence from regions but should also be separate from traditional western and Muslim approaches; the introduction of tension can be creative and can be to everyone's mutual benefit.

He remarked that some of the people teaching at British universities (who come from SOAS, Durham, Oxbridge etc.) tend 'to look down their noses' at centres such as Lampeter and Birmingham. These places are taking on Muslims who are critical of the traditional orientalist approach. There are different approaches from different traditions and this can introduce a constructive tension.

Although the work of BRISMES is important, he wondered whether it is the most appropriate forum; after all, it deals only with the Middle East, not South Asia or other parts of the Islamic world. The Dutch have introduced a 'study of Islam in the modern world', which is a government initiative bringing together four universities in a joint institute.

Interview with Dr Jabal Buaben, Director of the Centre for the Study of Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations, Department of Theology and Religion, University of Birmingham (02/07/04)

In Jabal Buaben's view, students from the Muslim world are attracted to the Centre because they are seeking different methodological approaches to the study of Islam. For others, the Christian-Muslim side attracts them. He said that there used to be a similar centre in Derby but it closed down.

When asked about the teaching of Islamic Studies, Dr Buaben responded that, when he was a student at the Centre in 1983, the MA was only by research; there were taught courses at certificate and diploma level. Since 1996, he has become concerned at some of the changes they have had to make to upgrade programmes. He feels that, when changes are made, they do not allow sufficient time to see the impact of these changes (through the University and assessment of the market -- they have to meet market demands).

A PhD with integrated studies was introduced a couple of years ago and is a traditional Arabic teaching of Islam, requiring in-depth knowledge; the British approach to research might not be so helpful to these candidates (it is more like the American system which includes taught elements and also a thesis). This is one of the major changes in the research area. With regard to modules, they are constantly introducing new elements with a contemporary flavour -- they cannot ignore the outside world. But, in his opinion, they may need to re-think the delivery of some modules. The constant question is what constitutes a degree in Islamic Studies -- are there core elements that have to be there? At Birmingham, they are also trying not to remain too traditional (as is the case in some Muslim countries).

Dr Buaben considers that the Study of Islam and Muslims is exactly what they are doing at the centre, for example modern Islamic thought, Islam in Europe, regional studies, in order to see how Islam operates on the ground.

Funding is the major problem and this is one reason why the world is in such a state; governments have not made much input into this area and, therefore, there is not much expertise (for example, the British government). There needs to be more funding allocation, not just for Arabic but for wider issues (most people in the Muslim world do not speak Arabic), for example, the religious riots in Nigeria.

There should be a constant review at government level about how Islam and Muslims can be understood. This, in his view, is very important; it is imperative that those in responsible positions know how to interpret what is going on in the Muslim world in order to assuage suspicions (for example, police stopping Muslims on the street in Britain); otherwise, society will have problems and there will be no social cohesion.

At the academic level, they have to respect western academic traditions and methodologies. Islam has its own internal structures and anyone who wants to understand will have to take these into account, or they will not be very accurate.

Interview with Dr Eugene Rogan, University Lecturer in the Modern History of the Middle East, Faculty of Oriental Studies and Fellow of St Antony's College, University of Oxford (26/07/04)

Eugene Rogan said that the average student of the Middle East is well served by an interdisciplinary approach. However, they must be grounded in a discipline -- the learning tools and methods of a particular discipline, otherwise, they will be unable to get a job. Islam is a field in its own right but it is also interdisciplinary.

There is a problem of funding at St Antony's. The University of Oxford has not identified Middle Eastern Studies as a field to be funded. Posts are disappearing; for example, the economics post has gone, the geography of the Middle East post has not been re-filled (it had a low RAE grade); Modern Middle Eastern History has been downgraded to a part-time contract; and they have lost the post in Persian Studies.

There is no sense that a priority is placed on Middle East Studies at the University of Oxford. If there were no Middle East Centre, interest would be much reduced. The Faculty of Oriental Studies is much wider but they rely on St Antony's for the modern Middle East.

However, as he said, a strong Middle East programme is a gateway for more funding. He would rather work with the University on fund-

raising. Resources are a real problem. Although they can fund-raise themselves, he is not a fund-raiser -- he is doing the University's work although it is not in his remit.

Interview with Professor Robert Springborg, Director of the London Middle East Institute, the School of Oriental and African Studies (22/06/04)

In Robert Springborg's view, it is appropriate for academic staff to have more than one evaluative criterion applied to their performance. At the moment, their desire to contribute to outreach activities does not derive any reward. Publication has been established as the sole criterion and, therefore, people are driven by that alone. He would like to re-draft the basic contract of service so that some academics are evaluated by different criteria -- in this case, the LMEI. Individuals could be employed on the basis of half teaching/research and half for LMEI (which is separate from the normal university setting).

He believes that this would be a good model for British academia and would 'get them out into the street'. It would also help their development as professionals. They would interact with government and business, with people from the Middle East, academics; it would be much broader than the usual university setting.

He remarked on the 'overly centralized and government-controlled' nature of British tertiary education, which has led to a lack of flexibility in British academia.

The advantage of being independent, he noted, is that the Institute can serve as a model; it can also generate revenues from its activities. The Institute has no political point of view; it is not a think tank but is simply trying to present materials on the ancient and modern Middle East. It allows advocacy groups to be members as long as they abide by the rules -- it is not up to the Institute to judge; it merely provides a forum.

One must approach Middle Eastern studies, Professor Springborg suggested, through individual disciplines. However, it would be useful to have somebody in every university to draw together the regional expertise; therefore, they need to be resourced (in the USA, the federal government does this -- there is competition for Middle East funding for university centres but there is no equivalent to this in Britain).

This should be done not just to teach Arabic etc but also to facilitate collective activities for students and facilities. This needs funding and an incentive structure. Then the study of the Middle East will be on the map, institutionally speaking. In his view, there should be funding for centres -- this should be at the international level -- to review applications from institutions for support. BRISMES did not push in that direction, it just concentrated on Arabic language teaching -- it was opportunistic (tied to the Gulf War -- the idea that we need more people speaking Arabic to educate the troops). Behind this lay disciplinary interests but it is vital to move beyond these narrow concerns.

Professor Clive Holes, Professor for the Study of the Contemporary Arab World, the University of Oxford

"There is a strong demand for graduates with Middle Eastern language skills and area-studies knowledge in the UK intelligence, diplomatic and military services, particularly in the area of Arabic, which is not being met. The main structural problem here is that those employed have to be British nationals. We simply do not produce enough British graduates with the requisite detailed knowledge of the Middle East and requisite Arabic language competence.

"Middle Eastern language departments in UK universities are small and an easy target for financially hard-pressed Vice-Chancellors. They can easily be picked off when savings need to be made. In recent years we have seen the loss or 'dumbing down' of Arabic language study at several universities. The result of the actions of individual universities is the gradual loss of a national resource for teaching Arabic and other Middle Eastern languages and, in the longer term, because of the concomitant staff cuts, the loss of expert advice which should be available to government, the diplomatic and intelligence communities, and business.

"There is also a worrying effect in appointments: chronic lack of funding for graduate studies in these subjects, added to the poor prospects of obtaining employment in University departments at the end of graduate training over many years, mean that the British academic who teaches Middle Eastern languages and cultures is becoming an endangered species. In my own university, British applicants for ME jobs in the last 10 years have formed only a tiny proportion of applicants. Much the same is true for other universities.'[2]

[2] "The Crisis facing Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies in British Universities", Report following Seminar at Portcullis House, October 2003.

Appendix 5

A BRIEF HISTORY OF ISLAMIC STUDIES IN THE UK, WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

Dr Steven J. Sutcliffe

> There had been a time when [the 'Orient'] could be treated as a passive body to be dissected, but travel, the experience of imperial rule, and the revolt against it, and the revival of indigenous traditions of thought and writing have made it impossible to think of the 'Orient' in this way. Scholarship is now carried on by some kind of collaboration between those trained in the western tradition and those who, in addition to that training, bring something from their own tradition of Islamic thought and belief. Nobody can now write with meaning about the world of Islam if he does not bring to it some sense of a living relationship with those of whom he writes. (Hourani 1991: 4).

> What will be the ignorance and prejudice that a commentator three hundred years from now will detect in our comments on other faiths -- and on our own? ... The value of considering what our predecessors did ... is that their differences from us help to highlight conditioning factors that may influence understanding and thereby help us to appreciate what may be happening when we think we understand (Pailin 1994: 373).

This short survey largely treats the period from the mid-to-late Victorian period, on the grounds that, as Hourani (1991: 2) argues, by then 'Islamic scholarship had developed an organization -- methods of teaching, publication and communication -- and acquired a self-perpetuating authority which has continued to exist until today'. After sketching the Victorian development of the field -- much exercised by the 'colonial ambitions in the Middle East' of countries like England and France, as Martin (2001: 11) reminds us -- I move on to consider the teaching of Islamic studies in the C20th British context[3].

[3] The following account is based on the following secondary sources: Ahsan (1981), Arberry (1960), Bennett (1992), Buaben (1996), Harrison (1990), Hourani (1991), Macfie (2000), Martin (ed, 2001), Matar (1998), Pailin (1984, 1994), Thomas (1988, 1995) and Watt (1965). For reviews of C20th Islamic Studies scholarship outwith the UK, see *inter alia* Hermansen (1991) and Nanji (ed, 1997), which I have not been able to consult

But I need also briefly to establish a broader historical context for this survey: the modern age[4]. As a starting point, Nabil Matar (1998: 184) suggests that, because of the preoccupation of traditional British historiography with the 'internal history' of early modern Britain and its 'links with Christian Europe -- both Protestant and Catholic', opportunities have been missed to assess the extent of the 'inter-Mediterranean and inter-religious' engagement which he argues is an aspect of the 'English Rennaissance' (*ibid*: 185). In this area Islam was paramount, he suggests, and 'left its mark on Britain in a way that was unparalleled by any other non-Christian civilization which Britons encountered' (*ibid*: 184). Making a similar point on the presence of Islam to the early modern (Christian) European consciousness, Albert Hourani (1991:10) points out that the Qur'an had been available in Latin translations from the C12th onwards, and that certain Dominican houses in C13th Spain, for example, had expertise in Islamic theology (*usul-al-din*) and law (*fiqh*). However, the first Christian theologian to consider Islam seriously, St. John of Damascus (c.675-749), had indeed classed it as a Christian heresy, and this set a precedent: as Hourani (1991: 7) notes: 'From the time it first appeared, the religion of Islam was a problem for Christian Europe'[5].

From the late 16th century onwards, a body of north european scholarship on Islam began to emerge which represents the first stirrings of a systematised, institutionalised academic field of Islamic Studies. For

[4] A warning: the historiography on Islam in relation to Europe has largely been written as a cultural encounter between the two largest 'world' religions, Islam and Christianity. But with the decline of European institutional Christianities in the C19th and C20th and the hegemony of secular humanism, a more salient historical-cultural phenomenon in Europe is now the Secular-Muslim encounter (I owe this insight to Lloyd Ridgeon) since, as Goddard (2005) reminds us, the aphorism 'most Christians are not Westerners and most Westerners are not Christians' is broadly accurate. Nevertheless, the scholarly paradigm has largely not responded, and the field *qua* TRS remains strongly influenced by an 'interfaith' model of Muslim-Christian dialogue: for example, Goddard (2000a and 2000b) at Nottingham, the Birmingham Centre for Islam and Muslim-Christian Relations, journals like *The Moslem World* and *Islam and Muslim-Christian Relations*, conferences like the 'Christian-Muslim Dialogue' event at the University of Gloucestershire, Cheltenham, 9/11/04, and popular *daw'ah* publications like R.W. Maqsood's *What Every Christian should know about Islam* (2000). For more adventurous theorizations of the dynamics of C20th cultural 'encounter' between Islam and 'the west', see *inter alia* Ahmed (1992), Turner (1994), Sayyid (1997) and Kaya (2004).

[5] And arguably remains so: Wolffe (1993: 143) describes Islam in the 1990s as 'standing tall on the world stage as the most formidable ideological alternative to both Western Christianity and secularity'. For different assessments of Islam's symbolic challenge to/potential for Europe, see Sayyid 1997, Ramadan 1999 and Asad 2000.

example, in 1587 Arabic began to be taught on a regular basis at the College de France in Paris, and in 1613 a Chair in Arabic was created at Leiden in the Netherlands; Chairs at Cambridge and Oxford followed in 1632 and 1634 respectively (Hourani 1991:12-13; Matar 1998: 86). The first complete translation of the Qur'an into English was done by a Scot, Alexander Ross (1592-1654) in 1649, while working as a grammer school teacher in Southampton (Watt 1965: 2; Matar 1988: 73; Abdel Haleem 2004: *xxvii*). Ross did not know Arabic and made his translation from a French version by published by Andre Ryer in Paris in 1647 (Matar 1988: 76; Abdel Haleem 2004: *xxvii*). Abdel Haleem (2004: *xxvii*) describes Ross's translation as 'at times widely different from the original', with the title indicating the kind of presuppositions informing his work: '*The Alcoran of Mahomet translated ... and newly Englished, for the satisfaction of all that desire to look into the Turkish vanities*'.

But Ross was not the first to publish on the Qur'an in English. An English Arabist, William Bedwell (1563-1632), published in 1615 a list of the Qur'anic suras[6] entitled *Index Assvratarvm Mvhammedici Alkorani, That is, A Catalogue of the Chapters of the Turkish Alkoran, as they are named in the Arabicke, and known to the Musslemans ... Gathered and Digested according to their naturall order, for the Benefit of Divines, and such as favour these studies* (cited in Matar 1998: 73-4). In 1617, Samuel Purchas published the third edition of *Purchas His Pilgimage* (first edition, 1613) in which he 'drew on Bedwell's Qur'anic scholarship' (*ibid*: 74) to include translations of a few passages, including the opening verse of the Qur'an. And a century earlier, in 1519, William De Worde published *Treatyse of the Turkes Lawe called Alcoran*; however this, despite its title, contained little about the Qur'an but plenty about missionary desires to convert 'the Turk' and reform Christanity (*ibid*: 74, 121). These early and incomplete forays apart, Ross's 1649 translation remained the sole source in English until George Sale's translation in 1734[7].

The tractarian thrust of De Worde's *Treatyse* effectively reproduced, for a new era, the vigorous apologetics of St. John of Damascus, who earlier described Islam as a Christian heresy, and suggests that this early scholarship emerged in a cultural and political context dominated by

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[6] 'Bedwell, who knew the Qur'an well (as his work on an Arabic lexicon attests), gave the name of each sura ... transliterated it, translated it into Latin, and sometimes included notes about its history and composition ... Attached to the *Index* was *A Spiritvall Conference* in which Bedwell presented a general portrait of Islamic doctrine ... and Muslim religious practices' (Matar 1998: 74).

[7] For a recent resume of subsequent major translations of the Qur'an into English, see Abdel Haleem (2004: *xxvii-xxix*).

encounters and arguments with, and conversions to and from, Islam, as Matar (1998) has thoroughly documented on the basis of primary sources from elite and popular cultures in Britain. During this period, Islam was a powerful military and economic presence around the Eastern Mediterranean and North Africa and -- in the form of the Ottoman Empire -- reached the gates of Vienna in central Europe in 1683. As Lewis (1995: 13) remarks, it would seem that the very emergence of modern Europe was 'defined and delimited by the frontiers of Muslim power in the east, the southeast, and the south'. Not only this, but as Matar (1998: 3) puts it, 'Britons encountered a powerful religious and military civilization which viewed *them* as an inferior people with a false religion' (emphasis added). This awareness was not confined to intellectual elites, but entered popular culture across the country in the form of dramas and sermons that took 'the Turk', the 'Saracen' and the 'Renegade'[8] as their *dramatis personae*:

> [I]n the first half of the seventeenth century [the convert to Islam] appeared in dramas and sermons and church porches, and communities from Plymouth to Stepney discussed, pitied, defamed, welcomed and ostracised him. The renegade was an Other in the midst of English society because he reminded priests and writers, urban theater-goers and village congregations of the power and allure of the Muslim Empire (Matar 1998: 72).

In other words, by the early modern period 'Islam was no longer viewed as a religion with which Christians were engaged in distant lands but as an intellectual and social matter at home' (*ibid*: 73). Consequently 'Muslims had a power of self-representation which English writers [and their audiences] knew they had either to confront or to engage' (*ibid*: 11-12). From the sixteenth century until the beginning of the decline of the Ottoman Empire in the eighteenth century, Britons 'could neither possess nor ignore' Islam (*ibid*: 20), although their representations of it were largely driven by polemical and disputatious concerns arising from internal *Christian* debates on such matters as the challenge of 'natural religion' to Christian revelation, the dangers of 'reason' to 'faith', and the enduring stand-off between Protestants and the so-called Papal 'anti-Christ'. As Pailin (1994: 370) puts it, this and similar material 'may properly be seen to tell us much more about the internal debates over faith and reason in Christianity and about the ignorance and prejudice of those who used this material than about what was actually believed and practised in other faiths'. Therefore early modern British accounts of

[8] Originally meaning 'a convert to Islam', from Spanish *renegado*, first used in this sense in 1583 (OED)

Islam in particular are better read as attempts to justify particular *Christian* positions through berating a straw man, rather than by real attempts to render empirical portrayals of a different religion; although plain bigoted attacks on 'the Other' also maintained their place[9]. As Muslim self-confidence weakened with the decline of the Ottoman Empire, Europeans felt less constrained by Islamic power -- both diplomatic-military and doctrinal -- and consequently better able 'to draw, paint, poeticize and imagine the Muslims the way they liked' (Matar 1998: 11; Said 1995: Chapter 3).

Public awareness of Islam increased in the eighteenth century. In 1784 Joseph White, Professor of Arabic at Oxford, took as the subject of the Bampton lectures 'a comparison of Islam and Christianity by their origins, evidence and effects', while in 1791 Dr. Johnson, in *Boswell's Life of Johnson*, says that 'there are two objects of curiosity -- the Christian world, and the Mahometan world. All the rest may be considered as barbarous' (cited in Hourani 1991: 11-12).

By the early C19th the dissemination 'at home' of a certain body of information about Islam, plus colonial expansion overseas by British, Dutch and French rule, prompted two possible attitudes which, while divergent, were united in taking Islam seriously as a historical force: either as a rival and enemy of Christendom, or as a kind of natural religion, *bona fide* and acceptable enough, though in this (restricted) form only (Hourani 1991: 16-17). The rise of Victorian evangelicalism and the missionary spirit intensified the sense of religious contestation and combat: for example, Thomas Valpy French (1825-1891), Principal of St John's College at Agra and subsequently Bishop of Lahore, wrote that 'Christianity and Muhammadanism are as distinct as earth and heaven, and could not possibly be true together' (cited in Hourani 1991: 17)[10]. A

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[9] Pailin (1984: 82) finds that 'the knowledge of Islam among theologians in this period is very mixed in quality and quantity': see his selection and discussion of primary texts (*ibid*: 81-104, 198-222). Matar locates the roots of modern animosity towards Islam in this recognition of the scope and extent of Islamic imperial power in the recent past, especially in comparison with other 'heretical' cultures (Jews and Catholics being the primary points of comparison in the British context): 'Muslims were different ... they were associated with a history of military and religious power which had succeeded not only in resisting Christian imperialism and evangelization but in threatening the shores of Albion' (*ibid*: 1900. For a discussion of a rare exception in early modern British representations of Islam, notable for fairness, accuracy and empathy, see Bosworth (1976) on Henry Stubbe's *Life of Mahomet*. However, although written and circulated in the 1670s, this was not acually published until 1911!

[10] See S. Lee, *Controversial Tracts on Christianity and Mohammedanism*, Cambridge 1894 (cited in Hourani 1991: 18, fn. 21)

similar view was espoused by the notable scholar, William Muir (see Buaben 1996), who in *The Mohammedan Controversy* (Edinburgh 1897) described Islam as 'the only undisguised and formidable antagonist of Christianity' and 'an active and powerful enemy', thereby echoing the view of Friedrich Schleiermacher, who had portrayed Christianity and Islam as two colossi 'contending for the mastery of the human race' (Hourani 1991: 24).

But there were more irenic voices. Watt (1965: 4) suggests that, in various qualified ways, Leibniz, Kant and Goethe had at least 'been prepared to allow that Islam was an expression of the one true religion'. Similarly, figures like J. G. Herder (1744-1803) and G.W.F. Hegel (1770-1831) found some room for positive evaluations of Islam in their respective philosophies of culture and history. However, ultimately Islam was still represented as an interesting but ultimately 'passing' phase in the historical evolution of religion. Hence Hegel would write complacently that 'Islam has long vanished from the stage of history, and has retreated into oriental ease and repose' (*ibid*: 27). More favourably, the writer and philosopher Thomas Carlyle famously included Muhammad in his lecture 'The hero as prophet' in *On Heroes, Hero-Worship and the Heroic in History* (1841), first given in Edinburgh on 8 May 1840, describing Muhammad as 'a silent great soul: one of those who cannot but be in earnest' (*ibid*: 19).

Colonial expansion overseas by British, Dutch and French rule is clearly a major historical factor in accounting for studies of religion in the modern period (Chidester 1996). Clinton Bennett's *Victorian Images of Islam* (Bennett 1992) provides useful insights into representations of Islam in C19th Christian theological and apologetical orientalist writings, although it is less contextualised in the politics of Empire than Thomas (2000), for example, has argued should be the case. Bennett's book is based on doctoral research carried out in the mid-1980s at a significant site in the UK for the production of discourses on Islam, namely the Centre for the Study of Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations (CSIC), established in 1976 at Selly Oak Colleges, Birmingham, and subsequently incorporated into the University of Birmingham. Bennett (1992: ix) argues that 'our present-day attitude towards Islam [is] fundamentally shaped not by ... contemporary events [eg. at the time of Bennett's writing, the *Satanic Verses* controversy of 1988-89 and the 1991 Gulf War] but by our awareness of nineteenth-century attitudes, especially of missionary writing'. Bennett rightly puts his finger on a little-analysed influence on the modern academic historiography of religions in general, and not just

Islam: Victorian Christian missiology[11]. But his lack of reflexivity on this point is frustrating: the collective personal pronoun he uses ('our') is, of course, implicitly Christian, as the author confirms by locating his chosen six 'Christian writers' on Islam within a unilateral context of 'developing Christian attitudes to Islam' (*ibid*: 1). However, Bennett's focus on Christian attitudes makes sense in a historical context where, at Oxford and Cambridge, religious tests -- to ensure candidates subscribed to the Thirty Nine Articles of the Church of England -- were not abolished until 1871 (Gilliat-Ray 2000:22), and where, in the mid-C19th, 'all heads of house except one were in the Anglican ministry; virtually all tutors were clergymen; and about 80 per cent of undergraduates were intending to pursue a clerical career' (D. Bebbington, cited in Gilliat-Ray 2000: 21).

Three of Bennett's chosen writers represent what he calls a 'confrontational' approach, and three a 'conciliatory' approach, to Islam (*ibid*: x). The criteria underlying all approaches are theological: five are Church of England; one a Baptist (*ibid*: 13). The 'conciliatory' group, of which Bennett finds F.D. Maurice to be typical, was sympathetic to Islam within the particular terms of a confessionalist theology of religions. These 'conciliators' were British-based 'amateurs' who had no training in oriental studies and were reliant on secondary sources. In contrast, the 'confrontational' group were 'expert linguists' (*ibid*) but 'reactionary' (*ibid*: 12, 13) in their doctrinal stance, since they saw themselves as 'preserving Christian truth against those who ... "compromised" with Islam' (*ibid*: 13). Bennett draws from the co-existence of these two camps some general conclusions on the wider popularity of comparative theology and missiology in Victorian Britain:

> As these writers were mutually aware of the others' opinions, a debate developed between them which suggests that last century saw more creative thinking about Islam than we usually asume, that theology of religions was of more popular concern than we tend to think and

[11] It can be argued that Victorian missiology in turn only reconstitutes traditional apologetical concerns in the study of 'other religions', such as we have seen to affect the study of Islam, approached through a Christian lens. Surprisingly, however, standard histories of the study of religion such as Sharpe (1986) and Capps (1995) make only very passing reference to the influence of missiology; eg. Sharpe (1986: 145, 151-154) focuses on just one Protestant missionary scholar, J.N.Farquhar, whom he in any case treats as a *beneficiary,* rather than an *agent,* of comparative religion methodology. For a more robust if brief exploration of the nexus of imperial politics, economics, missiology and comparative religion, see Thomas (2000); for a contemporary British/European case study, Cox and Sutcliffe (forthcoming) document the enduring strength of missionary backgrounds in the biographies of scholars and institutions who established RS as a disciplinary field in Scotland.

> that not everyone accepted without question the attitude of 'ineffable superiority' towards everything non-European.

The popular appetite for knowledge (however tendentious) about religions in the Victorian period has been noted by others. Banman (1989), for example, analyses relevant articles in periodicals like *MacMillan's Magazine* (London, from 1859) to show that, prior to the 1877 Universities Act (which widened the range of subjects studied in British universities), periodicals were an important source of both serious original scholarship, and popular yet informed presentations. Thomas (1988: 76-77) remarks on the 'considerable scholarship' contained in sources like *The Penny Cyclopedia*, published in twenty-seven volumes from 1833 by the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge; for example, the entry under 'Mohammed, Abul Kasem Ibn Abdollah' provides 'a brief biography of the Prophet, the state of Arabia before his rise and a brief treatment of the "principles" of Islam' (*ibid*: 76). And Beckerlegge (1997: 244) notes several considered articles about Islam in late-nineteenth century reviews like the *Dublin Review*, the *Fortnightly Review* and the *Nineteenth Century*. But he also goes on to argue that Islam 'was widely identified as the religious faith held by nations and groups that were regarded as hostile to Britain's political and economic interests' (*ibid*). This was perhaps not surprising, given that -- amongst other evidence -- Britain was then in conflict with Afghanistan (1839, 1878-1880), had recently contained the rise of the Mahdi in Sudan in the 1880s, and had annexed much of the territory which was formerly part of the (Muslim) Mughal empire in India (*ibid*: 244-5).

One of Bennett's 'conciliators', F. D. Maurice (who had heard Carlyle's original lecture on Muhammad in Edinburgh), included material on Islam in his *The Religions of the World and Their Relations to Christianity* (1846). This was first given as the Boyle lectures at King's College, London, and was based on the overtly apologetical brief of Robert Boyle's 1691 will which provided funds for eight annual sermons 'for proving the Christian religion against notorious Infidels, to wit, Atheists, Theists, Pagans, Jews and Mahometans' (cited in Thomas 2000: 78). Furthermore 'the preachers of these Sermons should be assisting to all companies, and encouraging them in any undertaking for propagating the Christian Religion to foreign parts' (*ibid*). Surprisingly, Sharpe (1986: 147) does not refer to this imperial, mercantile and apologetic brief, but he does commend Maurice for 'a breadth of sympathy [and] a desire for accurate and up-to-date information, which were unusual for the time'. The book provides an early survey in the 'world religions' mould, finding in Buddhism, Hinduism and Islam what Maurice calls a 'wonderful testimony ... borne from the ends of the earth' which made Christians 'debtors' to these

traditions (Maurice, *Religions*; cited in Sharpe 1986: 147). Nevertheless, Christians retained their position at the apex of global religious authority and revelation, and it is difficult to extract Maurice's liberal comparative theology from the web of economic, territorial and political concerns that were bound up with the Victorian heyday of Empire. In this light, and with reference to missionary David Livingstone's famous declaration in Cambridge in 1857 of the symbiotic march of commerce and evangelization in Africa, Thomas (2000: 77) remarks drily that Maurice's descriptive ambitions had the purpose 'not so much ... of "know thy enemy" but "know thy trading partner" '. In Thomas's view (*ibid*: 76), the development of 'comparative religion' in the UK in the nineteenth century was 'inextricably bound up' with a 'political/commercial nexus', given by the wider context of imperial expansion and regulation. This meant that not only was the persistent historical trend maintained of studying 'the other' for the purposes of 'counter-propaganda and conversion' (*ibid*: 74), but it became less easy to disguise the ways in which 'religious', 'political' and 'economic' motivations were mutually imbricated. That is, knowledge of Islam was increasingly bound up with having to 'place' it in a 'league table' of 'great' or 'world' religions, which in turn could scarcely be separated out from assessing and ranking the political, economic and military clout of the 'civilizations' underpinning them. Such a 'blunt imperialistic language' (Smith 1998: 279) is on display in the Dutch scholar C. P. Tiele's 1884 entry on 'religions' in the ninth edition of the *Encyclopedia Brittanica*, where Tiele describes and defends his use of the category 'world religion' to distinguish three religions -- Buddhism, Christianity and Islam -- which 'profess the intention to conquer the world' (Tiele 1884, cited in Smith: 279). As Tiele goes on to write with Hobbesian or Nietzschean bluntness: 'Strictly speaking, there can be no more than one universal or world religion, and if one of the existing religions is so potentially, it has not yeat reached its goal' (*ibid*). Such were (and are) the epistemes of empires, in which the practices and representations of religions in general, and Islam in particular, were inescapably caught up, then as now.

However, as far as the emerging field of 'comparative religion' as an academic project was concerned, with its hidden and not-so-hidden theological, 'deist' and -- increasingly, in the twentieth century -- theosophical and perennialist agendas, Thomas (1988: 282-3) points out that Islam did not command the same level of attention as Indian religions like Buddhism and Hinduism (even though, of course, geopolitically and ethnographically Islam could equally qualify as an 'Indian' religion). Like Judaism, the other representative of near-eastern semitic monotheism, Islam could be considered a 'special case' by comparativists. Whereas Judaism tended to escape scrutiny on the

(apologetical) grounds that it was actually the 'root' of Christianity and hence not properly an 'other' at all, Islam was largely not incorporated into comparativists' agendas, in part because of the acknowledged history of animosity between it and Christianity, and in part because it had already received (and was continuing to receive) sufficient explicit apologetical attention and therefore did not merit the kind of covert, latent (Protestant) theologising implicit in the work of early comparativists like F.M. Mueller in England and Tiele in Holland. Islam might even slip the net of expectations and find unlikely supporters. For example, Thomas (1988: 77-8) points out that *Mahometanism Unveiled* (1829), by the Anglican rector Reverend Charles Forster, whilst on the surface offering the usual 'apologia for the supremacy of Christianity' (*ibid*: 77), nevertheless worked hard to offer a defence of Islam (qualifed and ultimately subordinated, certainly) on the grounds that, in Thomas's gloss of Forster, it has 'a valid prophetic existence, that its success in the world ... was testimony to the validity of its existence [and] that it was in a "joint operation" with Christianity "acting co-ordinately, upon a vast scale, on the civil and social relations of mankind, and on their moral and spiritual interests and affections" ' (*ibid*: 78).

The rise of comparative language studies, or comparative philology, in the late C18th and early C19th stimulated new curiosity in Islam, in terms of Arabic language interests and comparative mythology. Influential figures in the latter included the German scholar resident in England, F. Max Mueller (1823-1900), and the French scholar Ernest Renan (1823-1892), whom Hourani (1991: 28) considers 'one of the seminal figures in the formation of European ideas about Islam'. In particular, Renan's notion of relative cultural evolution, by which different cultures moved through distinctive phases of emergence, growth and decay, produced an ideology which prioritised 'Europe' as the new civilisational future: the 'necessary condition of this', glosses Hourani (1991: 30), is 'the destruction of the Semitic element in civilization, and of the theocratic power of Islam'. Renan's fantastic stereotype of Islam -- wildly divorced from the historical record -- led him to write, in a lecture entitled 'L'islamisme et la science', that Islam functioned as an 'iron circle in which the believer's head is enclosed, making him absolutely closed to science, and incapable of opening himself to anything new' (cited in Hourani 191: 30).

A more scholarly philological development, but with mixed political outcomes for Islam, came with Julius Wellhausen's (1844-1918) 'higher criticism' of the Old Testament. In *History of Israel* (1878) and other works, Wellhausen argued that Judaism had emerged out of an earlier Mosaic religion, in which the prophet or holy man came first, followed by institutions, beliefs and practices. Such a scheme could be, and was,

generalised as a model for the historical development of all religions; indeed, Wellhausen also wrote about Islam in these terms, paying particular attention to Muhammad as a prophet or 'hero of religion' (Schleiermacher's term, cited in Hourani 1991: 31).

Gradually, there emerged on the back of these early modern experiments in ideological critique, normative comparative philosophy, philology and biblical criticism from the early C17th into the C20th, a 'slow accumulation of knowledge and understanding based on a study of written texts, and to some extent also on direct observation' (Hourani 1991: 32) that came to be known as 'Islamic Studies', and which from 1873 began to hold periodical congresses. Its main work was the study and teaching of Arabic and related Islamic languages, and to this end grammars, dictionaries, translations and topographical studies were all produced. In many cases the field was tacked onto Hebrew and biblical studies. Two European chairs of Arabic of particular importance were at Leiden in the Netherlands, and at the College de France in Paris; an Ecole des Langues Orientales Vivantes (the adjective 'vivantes' is noteworthy) was subsequently created at the end of the C18th. These centres exerted influence in Germany in particular. However, the tradition remained comparatively weak, and was reliant upon personal contacts amongst individual scholars, and a kind of scholarly oral tradition that Hourani (*ibid*: 33) likens to the Arabic notion of a 'chain of witnesses', or *silsila*; indeed, he suggests that the Islamic Studies of late C19th and C20th Europe could ultimately be traced to a single *silsila* that went back to Silvestre de Sacy, Professor at the College de France in the early C19th.

There was a new strain of interest in Arabic in the late C19th, when continental Europeans like the Hungarian Jew, Ignaz Goldziher (1850-1921), the Dutchman C. Snouck Hurgronje (1857-1936) and the Frenchman Louis Massignon (1883-1962) were beginning to represent Islam to Europeans as 'something more than words in texts, as something *living* in individual Muslims' (Hourani 1991: 43; emphasis added; cf. the renewed interest in Arabic and other Middle Eastern languages at the Ecole des Langues Orientales *Vivantes* in Paris). In the UK, William Wright (1830-1889), son of a captain in the East India Company, began what Watt (1965:7) calls the 'Scottish period of Cambridge Arabic studies', becoming Professor of Arabic at Cambridge in 1879 after study at Leiden, and followed by W. Robertson Smith (1846-1894), R.A.Nicholson (1868-1945) and E.G.Browne (1862-1926). At Oxford, what Hourani (1991: 33) calls a 'new era of distinction' began with the appointment in 1889 of D.S. Margoliouth (1858-1940), although Hourani remarks on his limitations, being 'self-taught' and inclined towards a 'streak of fantasy, or perhaps of irony, which led him sometimes to propose untenable theories' (*ibid*; see

also Buaben 1996: Chapter 3). Margoliouth's later successor at Oxford was H.A.R.Gibb (1895-1971), appointed in 1939, who gave Islamic Studies in the UK a much firmer scholarly base and public presence. Meanwhile Watt (1965: 3) remarks, in his inaugural lecture as Professor of Islamic Studies at Edinburgh, that subsequent to Alexander Ross's pioneering translation of the Qur'an in 1849, for two centuries 'Scotsmen had little share in the slow development of Islamic studies' during a period in which a 'distorted "image of Islam" ... inherited from medieval times ... proved an incubus from which it was difficult to escape' (see also Daniel 1960). Watt underscores the importance of Carlyle's spirited defence of Muhammad in Edinburgh in 1840, describing him as 'the first man of repute in Europe to have the courage to say publicly and unequivocally that he believed Muhammad to be sincere' (Watt 1965: 4); he also points to the importance of C19th missionary activity in gathering and publishing empirical information about Islam and Muslims, such as Temple Gairdner (1873-1928), a missionary in Cairo, who published two books, and Ion Keith-Falconer (1856-1887), who briefly served in the Lord Almoner's Chair of Arabic at Cambridge as well as prospected for a mission with the Free Church of Scotland in South Arabia. In the Scottish university tradition Arabic had been studied chiefly as an adjunct of Hebrew, although there had been an independent Lectureship in Arabic at Edinburgh since 1912, and at the time of Watt's inaugural lecture the language was being studied independently at Aberdeen, Glasgow and St. Andrews (*ibid*: 9-10). Watt (*ibid*: 8-10) also points out the historical importance of Scottish Islamicists such as E.J.W.Gibb (1857-1901), William Muir (1819-1905), Principal of Edinburgh University between 1885-1903 (Buaben 1996: Chapter 2), Duncan Black Macdonald (1863-1943) and H.A.R.Gibb (*op cit*), who began his studies of Arabic at Edinburgh.

The emerging public presence of Islamic Studies in the C20th was aided both by the emergence of a formidable body of published work[12], and the foundation of new institutions. Important in the latter was the opening of the School of Oriental and African Studies at London University in 1917. Following approaches from the Senate of London University, recommendations were made in the Reay Report of 1909 for the UK to bolster its provisions for Arabic and 'oriental' language teaching and learning, on an 'area studies' model, to serve the (neo-colonial) needs of the new century[13]. The Reay report was in part based upon a

[12] See the extensive bibliographical survey of material published in Europe between 1910 and the 1980s, in Buaben 1996: Chapter 4.

[13] Named after its chairman: see *Report of the Committee appointed by the Lords Commissioners of HM Treasury to consider the Organization of Oriental Studies in London*, Cmd. 4560 (1909), cited in Hourani (1991: 66, n. 7)

questionnaire sent out to European Oriental Studies institutions, which found that the UK lagged behind other countries in both scholarly and practical training: for example, the questionnaire found that, at the Ecole des Langues Orientales Vivantes, 94 students were studying colloquial Arabic, 16 studying classical Arabic, 16 studying Persian and 15 studying Turkish. Hourani (*ibid*: 66) contrasts this healthy French scene with a moribund situation in the UK, where only one student took the Honours BA in Arabic and Persian at Oxford between 1910 and 1914, plus a 'limited number' of other students following a one-year preparatory course for the colonial civil services in India, Egypt and the Sudan. Apart from this very limited language learning, 'virtually no instruction in any Middle Eastern subject was given in any other faculty of the university' (*ibid*: 66). The situation was similar at Cambridge and even worse, according to Hourani, in London.

Edwardian colonial conceits and agendas -- economic, political and cultural -- underpinned the Reay rationale for a new institution. Its audience and clientele was clearly identified as 'persons ... going out to the East or to Africa ... for public service or private business' and who therefore needed 'some familiarity with the social manners, and with the peculiar notions and prejudices of Oriental peoples' in order to avoid 'an unintentional breach of etiquette or an offence against some religious prejudice'[14]. The aim, in other words, was to create 'a nucleus of disinterested Oriental scholars ... training other scholars as well as our future Indian and colonial officials', and this was a task 'of vital importance to the Empire'[15]. But a practical aim was inscribed here as well as the more familiar scholarly 'ivory tower': not just 'pure' philological competence, but 'living' (Fr. *vivante*) acquaintanceship with cultural mores and societal norms alongside contemporary vernacular languages. In its own (colonial and neo-colonial) ways, SOAS was an 'engaged' project from the start[16].

In 1944, towards the end of the second world war and in a radically transformed geo-political context, the Foreign Office set up a new committee, the Scarborough committee, to address the current state of play in the fields of Oriental, Slavonic, east European and African studies;

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14 pp. 3, 18 in *Report* (1909), cited in Hourani (1991: 67).

15 p.16 in *Report* (1909), cited in Hourani (1991: 68).

16 For a recent history of SOAS, see Arnold and Shackle (eds, 2004). In a very different guise, and to different political ends, 'engaged' studies of Muslims and Islam re-emerged in the UK and Europe in the later C20th in the theorising of Muslim minority religious identities and diasporas: eg. Sayyid (1997), Modood (2002, 2004).

its report was presented in 1947[17]. This was, of course, the year in which India achieved independence, when 'decisions affecting half the world would no longer be made in London and Paris, and what had been questions of colonial rule would become questions of international diplomacy' (Hourani 1991: 68). The report recommended the replacement of an empire of crude power with a 'moral empire' in the spirit of Attlee and Aneurin Bevin (*ibid*: 68), established on the basis of 'cooperation between nations' grounded in 'sound' scholarship (*ibid*: 69). Unilateralism was to give way, at least in theory, to a more consensual and dialogical approach.

The Scarborough report found little systematised educational address of the problems identified nearly 40 years ago by Reay. SOAS had been a small exception, now with 12 teachers of contemporary Middle Eastern languages, but in fact very few students: only 3 British students took BA Honours in Arabic and Persian at SOAS between 1930 and 1944. At Oxford between 1935 and 1939, only 2 students took an honours degree in Arabic, plus 1 in Persian (*ibid*: 69). On becoming Professor of Arabic at Oxford in 1939, H.A.R. Gibb began to broaden the curriculum, including Islamic history, but the institutionalised marginality of the subject remained ingrained: for example, his lectures on Islamic history were not advertised for modern history students (*ibid*).

After the second world war public interest grew, stimulated by returning soldiers from the Middle East: at least 12 students took an Honours BA in Arabic or Persian in Oxford between 1947 and 1949 (*ibid*). The Scarborough Committee took up once more the notion of a balance between 'pure' scholarship and 'applied' practical training for 'overseas', as suggested by the Reay report. They also made two new recommendations. First, Institutes of Oriental Studies should be set up internationally to act as local, 'indigenous' bases for research, on the basis that, as Hourani (*ibid*: 70) puts it:

> oriental studies could no longer be carried on only by transmission from one generation of orientalists to another, they demanded immersion in the 'orient' itself, so that it should no longer be strange and 'other'.

Important here also was the recognition in the report that an 'equal partnership of western and indigenous scholars' (*ibid*) was now required.

[17] Foreign Office, *Report of the Interdepartmental Committee of Enquiry on Oriental, Slavonic, East European and African Studies*, London 1947, cited in Hourani (1991: 68, n. 11).

This was a significant turn, for as Hourani (1991: 55) points out, as recently as 1928, in Oxford, at the 17th international congress of Orientalists, only around a dozen out of 750 members were Muslims. There is an assumption here, analogous to anthropology's preoccupation with 'other cultures' (to cite the title of Beattie's 1964 textbook), that Muslims were not to be found in the UK or Europe, but belonged 'somewhere else'; post-war/post-colonial issues pertaining to the growth of Muslim communities 'at home' were still to arise.

The second innovation in the Scarborough report was its recommendation that UK teaching be concentrated into a limited number of centres in order to avoid diffusion of energies and crystallise instead a 'critical mass' of scholarship. Oxford was one of these, and by 1952-3 the Professor of Arabic (Gibb) had been joined by full-time teachers of Arabic, Persian and Turkish, plus teachers of *fiqh* and *usul al fiqh*, Islamic theology and philosophy, and modern Middle East history. By this time there were also some 20 postgraduate students, including Arabs. The 'orientalist' model that held this programme together was strongly inclined to an 'area studies' approach, and was embodied in Gibb, whom Hourani (*ibid*: 71) calls a 'universalist Arabist'.

In Scotland, the knock-on effect of the Scarborough Commission saw Edinburgh adding Persian, Turkish and Urdu to its curriculum, and a degree course in Islamic History (Watt 1965: 11). In 1961 another phase of expansion was triggered by the publication of a report by the Hayter Commission, which at Edinburgh saw a Centre of African Studies created. Watt, writing in 1965, had high hopes for fruitful interdisciplinary studies between this new Centre, and Arabic and Islamic Studies:

> The religion of Islam is expanding in Sub-Saharan Africa at a much faster rate than Christianity. A year or two ago something like two-thirds of the heads of independent states in Africa were Muslims. By the end of the [twentieth] century it is likely that Islam will be the dominant religion of Africa ... [I]t is in Africa that the most interesting developments within Islam are to be expected during the next few decades (Watt 1965: 11)[18].

And yet notwithstanding the 'chiefly practical and utilitarian' motives of the Scarborough and Hayter Commissions (and by this phraseology, Watt seems to mean their strategic agenda in securing British, and presumably

[18] For a detailed Muslim critique of Watt's scholarship, see Buaben 1996: Chapter 5. Buaben (1996: 155) finds Watt to be 'perhaps the most respected' of the Western orientalists amongst Muslims.

wider NATO, interests in the cold war period), Watt is also keen to stress the more straightforwardly educational benefits of Arabic and Islamic Studies:

> If we are to live in a world where men from different cultures are meeting on a basis of equality, is it satisfactory to have an ideal of education which restricts itself to Western or Euroamerican culture? ... It seems probable that by the year 2000 no man will be considered truly educated unless he has engaged at university level in some study of a non-European culture ... Perhaps we should look forward to the time when the greatest works of Islamic and other Asian cultures are read and respected along with those of Greece and Rome as 'classics' of the 'one world' (Watt 1965: 13).

Published just two years before the founding of the Religious Studies department at Lancaster University, Watt sounds a modestly prophetic note here in his quiet invocation of a globalising, multicultural approach to the study of religion.

Conclusion: Islamic Studies in Context

The foregoing summary suggests the importance of contextualising the historiography of Islamic Studies (and of the study of religions in general), in order to show wider social, economic and political contexts impinging upon the academy and actively shaping the development of academic knowledge. We could conveniently group these forces into two kinds:

1. neo-/colonialism: Islamic Studies has evidently been shaped by foreign policy and diplomatic strategies in the C20th, as much as in the Victorian heyday of the British empire. This should come as no surprise: the growing body of work on contextual histories of the study of religion show that academic knowledge of 'religion/s' has always been closely tied in to contemporary interests and pressures: it is just that these have been disguised or ignored for various ideological reasons. A good contemporary instance of the salience of a political historiography of RS is the debate on the funding and rationale for RS in the USA during the cold war period, when the USSR and China played the role of 'the other'/'the enemy' to the western collective subject: the 'we' or 'us' tacitly understood to be both agent and audience of research into 'religion/s' (Dolezalova *et al* 2001; McCutcheon 2004). By analogy, might there be a comparable 'applied' agenda, perhaps especially on the part of government agencies, in pursuing certain kinds of knowledge about Islam, and not others, on the post-Communist world stage? This is certainly not to erase academics' freedom to construct multiple

knowledges 'against the grain' of monolithic, hegemonic representations (and indeed the evidence suggests that the vast majority of IS teachers in the UK do just this, with nuance and determination), but it is at least to flag up the issue as an example of real political issues lurking beneath the surface of the study of religions.

2. local/popular knowledge base: the audience for knowledge about Muslims and Islam is not just academic insiders and government policy-makers, but the wider public. There is considerable local and popular interest in religion in the UK, reflected in television, radio and print journalism, for example, including regional publications and radio stations. This is sometimes poorly-informed or ideologically-conceived -- particularly on state and commercial television -- but more 'locally', or in 'niche' forms, can be well-informed and sophisticated (eg. *Q-News*). But popular interest is always enthusiastic and strategic. This popular interest inevitably carries over into, and partly informs, academic perspectives and methodologies. This has always been so, although it remains little discussed. The self-educating, self-improving interests of Victorians in 'comparative religion' (Banman 1989, Thomas 1986) and C20th concerns with 'world religions' and most recently, with 'spirituality' (on the part of white ethnicities in particular), are equally part of a changing 'folk' understanding of what 'religion' is, means and does. In particular, the 'interested public' as audience for studies in religions post-1960s has increasingly included a growing, informed and (crucially) *practising* Muslim public (and other minority religious groups) who are keen to explore, debate and defend their identities, traditions and histories. The academic practice of Islamic Studies in the UK therefore cannot easily be divorced from the growing presence and attention of Muslims of a range of ethnic origins from the late C19th to the present (Ansari 2004)[19]. For example, Lewis (2002: 13) writes that already by the early 1920s 'it was reckoned that thirty regularly attended prayers at the Woking mosque [built 1889], that there were a thousand British Muslims scattered about the country and 10,000 Muslims from overseas'[20]. Principal centres of early Muslim settlement in the UK included ports such as Liverpool, London, Cardiff, South Shields and Hull (*ibid*:11). In 1944 King George VI opened the Islamic Cultural Centre on a site at Regent's Park, London, in exchange for a site for an Anglican Cathedral in Cairo. Funds for building work were collected, although it was not until 1977 that the Central Mosque was finally opened. The London mosque in turn was part of a

[19] Just as the C19th history of the rise of 'comparative religion' cannot be uncoupled from its own constituencies, audiences and (strongly WASP) demographic bases.

[20] Lewis draws on a report in *The Sunday Telegraph,* 3/2/91.

growing cluster of registered mosques around the UK -- what Lewis calls (*ibid*: 13) a 'dramatically rising curve' from 18 in 1966, to 136 in 1977, and 338 by 1985. Conversion to Islam amongst majority ethnic communities had been noted by Matar (1998) as early as the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, but in the modern period the first notable convert was a Liverpool solicitor, William Henry Quilliam (1856-??), who established a thriving community of converts in Liverpool in the 1890s, in 1894 gaining the title of *Sheikh-ul-Islam* of the British Isles from the Sultan of Turkey and the Amir of Afghanistan (Beckerlegge 1997: 246-265). Particular 'indigenous British' convert groups have been studied more recently by Kose (1996) and, in Scotland, by Bourque (1997).

Today, Muslims exist variously as part of the public audience for research, as a growing student body on campus, and (increasingly) as academic staff formulating new methodologies and curriculae at the beginning of the twenty-first century. Twentieth century Muslim audiences also demonstrate the persistence of 'niche' public audiences for the dissemination and reception of academic research: in this case, a particular religious constituency. To take just one public institutional example close to home: in the current period, Muslims constitute a significant minority in universities as both students and lecturers, bearing out the salience of Gilliat-Ray's remark that 'religion on campus is moving out of the strictly private realm, and challenging some of the norms and assumptions of "secular" institutions as well as those with strong Christian histories'. For Gilliat-Ray, Muslims are a particularly assertive example of a religious constituency in Higher Education -- perhaps the paradigmatic religious constituency of early C21st Europe -- and the Muslim presence in UK universities is indexed not just by uptake of courses on Islam, but in the structural-institutional recognition of specific Muslim needs in the context of 'rights' discourse. These include, for example, provision of prayer facilities, *halal* diet, and recognition of the Muslim calendar (Gilliat-Ray: 94-6, 98-101), and also take the form of a range of 'equal opportunities' policies, statements and codes of practice regarding the public practice of religions -- including Islam -- in 'secular' UK universities (see the examples in the appendices to Gilliat-Ray 2000).

These (still relatively recent) developments in the UK are in turn an index of an 'increasingly visible Muslim subjectivity' (Sayyid 1997: 157) displayed at several sites in the post-war world, predicated upon the cultural-political range and flexibility of 'Islam' as a 'master signifier' (*ibid*: 47). But the 'return of faith' (Sayyid 1997: 4) represented by Islam as a high-profile 'public religion' (Casanova 1994; Herbert 2003) in the UK since c. the late 1980s should not blind us to the fact that its history in the British Isles, while quantitatively marginal, has been qualitatively forceful as a long-

standing tradition of religious subaltern 'witness' vis a vis the dominant order, whether Christian or secular[21]. Hence Wolffe (1993: 135) cautions us of the 'danger of viewing the history of Islam in Britain over the last half-century through "post-Rushdie" spectacles'[22], obscuring or ignoring the fact that Islam and Muslims have been real presences in Britain from the Renaissance and Restoration age (Matar 1998) through the period of Victorian missiological consciousness (Bennett 1992), into the twentieth century (Ansari 2004) and on into the post-war era with its renewed and intensified debates on identity, migration and globalization in European contexts (from a vast literature on transnational Islam in Europe, see Nielsen 2004[1992], Ramadan 1999, Cesari 1999 and various other contributions in Munoz, ed, 1999; Vertovec 2002 on the UK; and Sutcliffe 2004b on Scotland as a 'multiculturalising' case study).

As a brief digression to close this paper, I also note in regard to Wolffe's comment, above, the potential danger of habitually basing arguments for the importance of studying Islam in the contemporary world on extraordinary, atypical events and the rhetorics of crisis they trigger. Examples of these include Martin's (2001: *x*) throwaway remark that the 1980 Arizona symposium on Islam and Religious Studies (from which his collection stems) came 'just two months after the Iranian revolution and the taking of American hostages', regular discussions of Samuel Huntington's notorious 'clash of civilizations' thesis in relation to Islam in Europe (Al-Jabri 1999, Esposito 1999, Marranci 2004) and, most recently, 'post 9/11' frames and tropes (eg. Ehteshami 2002, Herbert 2004, Geaves and Gabriel, eds, 2004). The problem is arguably mirrored at the level of course design, where titles like 'Islam and Gender' or 'Islam and Modernity', not to mention ubiquitous tropes like 'Islamic fundamentalism', inscribe in everyday discourse and consciousness representations and associations of Islam as the always-problematic 'other'. The trend reaches an apogee in tropes like 'Islam and the West', which simplify, homogenise and essentialise that which it is the academics' paramount task to qualify, nuance and disaggregate. It is not

[21] There are two additional characteristics of UK Muslim communities that are sociologically salient: their youthfulness, and relative poverty. For recent profiles, see the ONS analysis of Census 2001 religion statistics reported in *The Guardian* 12/10/04 ('Census shows Muslims' Plight'), and a *Guardian* special report, 30/11/04, ('Young, British and Muslim').

[22] On the considerable sub-field of 'Rushdie affair'-type analyses of Islam in Britain, see Goddard (1991) and Herbert (2003, chap. 6). According to Herbert (2004:155-6) the response of Muslims to Rushdie's book was 'a key turning point' for Islam in the UK: it brought 'religion' into community relations discourse, challenging the hegemony of the concepts of race and class; and it 'led to the gradual development of a Muslim "public sphere" ... for the representation and contestation of Muslim identity in Britain'.

that the titles cited above, and others like them, are more often than not merely convenient 'marketing' flags which quickly give way to incisive analyses which unpack, qualify and reject the very essentialisms they identify as their problematic; or that, conversely, a 'strategic essentialism', in Spivak's approach, may not be politically necessary in order to engage various half-/un-spoken and popular representations, such as debates in the UK on 'Islamophobia' (although as Vertovec 2002 points out, 'Islamophobia' is only half the story and must be read alongside an increasing, reluctant but dogged, public awareness and recognition of Muslims). The problem is that the very act of brandishing these and similar tropes simply reinforces at a popular discursive level a kind of impatient equation of 'Islam = Problem' in which the full diversity and heterogeneity of Muslim voices -- moderate and measured, liberal and tolerant, subaltern and dissident alike -- get silenced. As Arkoun (1999:35) puts it (with echoes of Foucault):

> The first task of thinking ... is to render thinkable all the unthought and the unthinkable which has built up about the cognitive status and functions of the religious according to the example of Islam ... Islam considered as a system of beliefs and non-beliefs, as a tradition of long-standing pluralist thinking before becoming monolithic, dogmatic and isolated from the intellectual sphere is an enormous unthought which the up and coming political forces wish to keep strictly within the category of the unthinkable (i.e., what cannot be thought for fear of commiting blasphemy, or, in actual fact, for fear of weakening the ideology striving for power).

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Appendix 6

AL-MAKTOUM INSTITUTE'S NEW AGENDA FOR THE STUDY OF ISLAM AND MUSLIMS GLOBALLY

Al-Maktoum Institute recognises the *need* to set the agenda for the future development of Islamic Studies (and other related subject areas) into the Study of Islam and Muslims. The Institute will take a leading role in the establishment and implementation of this new agenda, for example by working in partnership with other academic institutions. The following points summarise this new agenda.

Post-orientalist:

- The Study of Islam and Muslims is a discipline with long established roots, but which must now face the challenges and opportunities of the twenty-first century.
- The Study of Islam and Muslims is based on a principle of mutual respect by all involved in this field of academic study, in which both Muslims and non-Muslims can share together a common sense of purpose and belonging, and a common intellectual goal.
- Scholars working in this focused field share a common aim to build bridges and to provide a meeting point between the Muslim and Western worlds of learning and to encourage scholarship and academic cooperation at this crucial time.
- The current crisis in the contemporary Muslim world is caused in part by the absence of cooperation between knowledge and power.

Post-traditionalist:

- The Study of Islam and Muslims is about the study of Muslim people, societies and cultures as well as the religion of Islam.
- The Study of Islam and Muslims is not only a faith based discipline, and it extends far wider than traditionalist approaches based on a theological pursuit of 'faith seeking understanding'.
- Universities in Muslim and Western countries should ensure that the teaching of Arabic and English language go hand-in-hand for the development of the study of Islam and Muslims in the twenty-first century.

- A better understanding in the West of Islam and Muslims can only be achieved by critical engagement and constructive dialogue based on analytical academic discourse through multicultural education.

Interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary:

- As a discipline, the Study of Islam and Muslims must seek to develop and define itself as post-orientalist, post-traditionalist, and multicultural, in which it is recognised that there is no single methodology or approach, but is both inter-disciplinary and multi-disciplinary.
- Such interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary training in the study of Islam and Muslims should be based in a number of different methodologies, including history, political science, anthropology, sociology, geography, gender, area studies as well as traditional areas in Islamic Studies.

Highest standards:

- We are in pressing need to encourage, support and develop research and teaching which achieves the highest quality, and which is based on critical, analytical and scientific standards.
- Scholars, researchers, and teachers within the Study of Islam and Muslims are expected to be trained to the highest possible standards in the field of their research, and as active researchers should strive to maintain the international standards of publication, peer review, dissemination, and continual engagement with contemporary scholarship.
- At the root of this discipline is a shared ethic of research, which is based on principles of multimethodology, multiculturalism, academic freedom, human rights and tolerance.

New field of inquiry:

- The new field of inquiry of Islamicjerusalem Studies is a central and vital element of the Study of Islam and Muslims, and must be developed as an example of the field based on the above principles.
- Islamicjerusalem Studies is a new branch of human knowledge based on interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary approaches. It aims to investigate all matters related to the Islamicjerusalem region, explore and examine its various aspects, and provide a critical analytic understanding of the new frame of reference, in order to identify the

nature of Islamicjerusalem and to understand the uniqueness of this region and its effects on the rest of the world in both historical and contemporary contexts.

Multiculturalism:

- The Study of Islam and Muslims should be based on the principle of 'One Discipline, Many Approaches', which is pursued by a cross-cultural academic body which may include people of any background.
- The differences between our cultural and religious backgrounds are what give strength and importance to this field of study, and the different cultural lenses that we each bring add to our pursuit of a common intellectual goal.

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